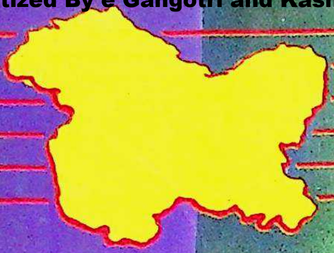

EMINENT PERSONALITIES OF KASHMIR

Edited by

K. L. KALLA

The book "Eminent Personalities of Kashmir", is , perhaps, the first book available, so far, about the eminent persons who are born and lived in Kashmir, since the time immemorial, when Kashmir was just a lake called "Sati-sar", from which water was drained off by Kashyappa Rishi through penances and this land became a veritable 'Heaven on earth, (says Firdaus); Sharda Peetha (Seat of Learning); or Kashir (the abode of Rishi Kashyappa), or Rishi Bumi, as saints, sages, savants lived here from time to time.

Kashmir produced a galaxy of luminaries, whose contribution in different fields remains unparalleled. Some of the great sons of Kashmir were Historiographers (Kalhana, Zonaraja, Sri Vara, Praja Bhata, Hassan etc.); others were philosophers (Soma Nanda, Abhinav Gupta, Utpala Gupta); Some of them were literary writers in Sanskrit before the fourteenth century; or in Persian during Muslim rule; or in Hindi and Urdu and English during the modern times (Shri) Bhat made his name and was appointed as Prime Minister by Zain-ul-Abidin whom he cured for a Malignant Ulcer on his neck. There were a number of saints, seers and mystics and suffis, like Lalla Ded and Nund Rishi.

The eminent personalities of Kashmir are not the kings who ruled, with the gun or the politicians who exploited and looted them, but all those innocent sons and daughters of the soil who earned name and fame in various fields i.e. cultural, literary, spiritual and mysticism, arts and crafts and philosophy. This work will serve the needs of the historians, researchers in history of Kashmir and also general readers who are interested in the subject.

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With profound regard, dedicated to the memory of my noble ancestors :

1. (Late) KAILASH NATH KALLA
2. (Late) Shrimati POSHKUJ

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Preface

The great American Poet, W.H. Longfellow has aptly said in the poem, "A Psalm of life" : Lives of great men all remind us/we can make our lives sublime/And departing leave behind us/Footprints on the sands of time" : It might not be an exaggeration to say that the history of a nation is directly or indirectly reflected by the history of its great men and women i.e. Abraham Lincoln in America, Rousseau in France, Karl Marx and Lenin in the earstwhile USSR, Gandhiji, Tilak, Patel, Subhash Chander Bose, Rajaji, and Nehru and Tagore in India, Sun yet sen and Mao Tse Tung in China, Ho Chi Min in Vietnam, Dr. Soekarno in Indonesia and Hitler in old Germany and Nelson Mendela in South Africa or Fiedal Castro in Cuba etc.

The lives of great men have been immortalised by some writers. i.e. Boswell has written the Biography of Dr. Johnson, Litton Strachey has written the biographies of Queen Victoria and Eminent Victorians. So, it is the duty of everyone to write about the lives of great men of his country. Kashmir should be proud of a galaxy of its great men and women who lived in the past as well as are living in the present. Some of these are : Rishi Kashyapa, the patron saint of Kashmir, who drained off the waters of the lake called Sati-Sar (Lake) through prayers and penances to goddess Sharika; Dida, the ancient queen; Suyya the ancient engineer; Badshah (Zain-Ul-Abidin), the noble king; Kalhana, Jonaraja, Srivara, Prajayata, (the ancient historian), Vasu Gupta and Utpala Deva, Abhinovagupta and Som Deva, the Shaiva philosophers; Ksemendra and Prakash Bhat, the ancient poets. In recent times, the names of Sheikh Mohd.

Abdullah (the great leader); Zinda Koul (Poet), Dina Nath Nadim (the poet), Hassan (historian) Anand Kaul and Mukund Ram Shastri have been great sons of Kashmir. Besides these, Kashmir has also produced a galaxy of saints and seers, like Lal Ded and Nunda Rishi.

Upto the 14th century, Kashmir was the land of Sanskrit scholars as all the inhabitants professed the Hindu Faith. Grierson, the eminent Indologist has said: "For upward of two thousand years, Kashmir has been the house of Sanskrit learning and from the small valley have issued masterpieces of History, Poetry, Romance, Fable, and Philosophy", which were composed by ancient scholars. According to Bilhana, an ancient scholar poet, "Even women in Kashmir spoke Sanskrit and Prakrit quite fluently". It may not be an exaggeration that, "Right from the very beginning of ancient times, Kashmir had become a vibrant clearing house of spiritual knowledge, a laboratory to nourish and give shape to new thoughts and a place where scholars concurred, conversed to give ground rules for thinking processes, language, logic, aesthetics, religions, philosophies, music, dance, and sciences. Scholars and spiritual seekers moved regularly from Kashmir to various parts of India and Central Asia" to teach and preach their wisdom to other countries". Some Kashmiri scholars settled outside Kashmir—Panini (the father of Sanskrit grammar); Patanjali (the author of Mahabhashya, the commentary of Panini's grammar, and *Yoga Darshana*"; Caraka (author of a famous book on medicine *Carkasamita*); Koka, the author of Koka Shastra, (Book on Sex); Damodara Gupta (author of *Kuttani Matam* (a book on ethics on concubinage.) and Kalidas, the most famous Sanskrit dramatist. Kashmir was rightly called SHARADA PEETHA (the seat of learning). When Europe was passing through dark age—with the exception of Greece, Egypt Rome and India.

As the number of eminent Kashmiris of the past and the present is large, it would suffice to make a passing reference to some of them in these pages. Lalitaditya (724–760 A.D.) was a great conqueror. He ruled Kashmir for 37 years and he conquered Punjab, Kanauj, Tibet, and Badakashan etc. His rule is known for prosperity and peace. He may be compared to Alexander the great.

Some noted female poets of Kashmir are : Lalladed (Mystic poet), Arnimal, Habba Khatun (songstresses), and Rupa Bhawani (saint). There were a number of Mystic Muslim Suffi poets as well.

Kashmir was called Rishi Bhumi as it gave worth to many saints and seers. There teachings had an impact on the people who also aimed at the attainment of spiritual truths, i.e. Vasu Gupta, Abhinava Gupta, Parmanand Shakti Chaitanya and Mast Bab, Kral Bab, Bhagwan Ji etc.

Hassan wrote Kashmir's History in Persian. Kashyap Bandu, was a social reformer among Pandits who aimed at changing the old style of dress of Kashmiri Females, by making them put on Sarees etc. Shiv Narayan Fotedar was a great Pandit leader and Anand Koul Bamzai was a Kashmiri historian. Mehjoor—was a great poet of Modern Kashmir and G.R. Santosh is a great Artist-Painter of Tantra Philosphy. Nadim, Rehman Rahi, Firaq, Hamidi, Tak Zainagiri are great modern poets and writers. Som Nath Sadhu was a noted Radio Artist and Writer.

Kadus Gojwari and Maqbool Sherwani were symbols of Secularism. During the Pathan Rule, when Kashmiris were oppressed by the cruel Pathan rulers, Pandit Vir Ju, Dhar left Kashmir to meet Maharaja Ranjeet Singh for help. He kept his wife and daughters in the house of Kadus Gojwari for protection. But when the Pathans came to know about it, they killed him and abducted the Pandit Females to Afganistan.

During Sikander's (Iconoclast) rule, maximum conversions of Pandits to Islam took place because of his persecutions. Ancient temples were razed to ground. There was an exodus to India and only Eleven Pandit families were left in Kashmir. Many are said to have been drowned to death at *Bata Mazar* on the bank of Dal Lake. During Pathan rule second exodus to India took place and families like Nehru, Koul, Katju, Razdan Kitchlo, etc. settled in India. Subsequent Migrations took place in 1947 (when Pak-raiders attacked Kashmir); in 1965 (when Parmeshori was converted to Islam); and recently in Jan. 1990 when three to four Lakh Hindus has to flee Kashmir under threat of Pak-trained Militants. Besides, many Pandits left Kashmir between 1947 to 1990 to seek jobs outside the State. Total number being about eight lakh.

It is pertinent to point out that the last Hindu ruler of Kashmir *Sahadeva* gave shelter to a Tibetan prince, Renchan and overtrusted him. He betrayed and staged a coup and became the ruler. He embraced Islam under the influence of Bul-Bul Shah and other

Sayyids. Another Pandit named Seha Bhat was converted in Sikandar's time. Secondly, High Caste Brahmins did not compromise with Buddhists and laid stress on religious rituals, due to which the common poor people embraced Islam.

The "Kalla" family is the direct descendent of Kalhan, the great ancient historian of Kashmir. Kalla means—Art, Head, or lonely—a man of artistic and philosophic nature. Lachmidhan Kalla was a sanskrit scholar and he settled in Delhi with Nehru's etc. They also settled in Rajasthan. Major General Kalla was Director, N.C.C. Kailash Nath composed *Sharda Primer* Nil Kanth Kalla was honoured by Maharaja Hari Singh by giving him a Khilat of Rs. 500/- for his efficiency and honesty. Nath Ji Kalla was a Sanskrit scholar and Astrologer. The Pandits wore Pathan type turbans in that rule; In Dogra rule they put on Punjabi Dress and Turbans. They even learnt persian in Muslim rule. Recently they became Angilised and became officers.

Acknowledgements are duly made to the writers of various chapters and journals : *Martand*, *Allarookh*, *Verinag*.

K. L. Kalla

1

Kalhana—The Great Chronicler

L. N. Raina

Kashmiri culture has been deeply influenced by the writings and sayings of its saints, Sufis, seers and sages. One of the important writers who could not lay claim to spirituality but could well be called a sage, and who has left a deep impact on the minds of the people not only of Kashmir but of India and the scholars of world repute is Kalhana Pandit, the historian-cum-political commentator of the 12th century. As is well known, India has been poor in its historians with the result that it has been difficult to reconstruct its glorious past in a coherent and a chronological manner. Kalhana is the only writer who had a sense of history and has recorded for us a fairly authentic chronicle of many centuries before him. He has also given us a vivid account of his own turbulent times which is as graphic as it is dispassionate and un-influenced by personal prejudices.

UNIQUE PERSONALITY

Kalhana Pandit was a unique personality in more than one sense. He, no doubt, was a great historian, yet he was equally a great versifier and a Sanskrit scholar. What is more, in an age in which the upper crust of the Hindu society in Kashmir had reached the lowest depths of depravity, here was a person belonging to the highest echelons of the time had kept his head high and remained aloof from the madding crowds. It was an age where son eliminated his father for a crown (of thorns) to be in turn slaughtered by his own son; brother stabbed brother in the back for a throne which he no sooner had to yieled to another usurper. There was intrigue and insurrection, cloak-and-dagger politics and sycophants had a field day.

In all this Kalhana retained his sense of propriety and the innate goodness of his nature which seeps through his writings in the concern for the poor, the deprived and the dispossessed. Unaffected by the putrid environment he went on with the mission of his life recording the story of the River of Kings, *Rajatarangini*.

HISTORY IN VERSE

Rajatarangini is the earliest extant history of Kashmir and the neighbouring area. A unique historical record in verse written around 1150 A.D. it contains invaluable information on political, social and cultural life of that turbulent period and history mixed with myth and mythology of centuries before him. The noted historian, Rawlinson, calls it "Hindu India's almost sole contribution to history." *Rajatarangini* stands out prominently as a comparatively exact chronology in Sanskrit. It recreates in picturesquely vivid form the chequered past of this ancient land. It is not a panegyric in praise of a king or a dynasty. It contains a connected story of the ruling families of Kashmir. There is hardly a contemporary work on history which can stand comparison with *Rajatarangini*.

WORK OF ART

Though a lot has been written lately about *Rajatarangini* both by foreign and Indian scholars, not much has been recorded about the life of its versatile author, or the influences that impelled him to undertake this great work of art. It is, therefore, creditable on the part of Prof. Somnath Dhar to try to reconstruct a life-sketch and an interesting account of this manysided personality from the internal evidence of his stupendous work. His monograph, *Kalhana*, published by Sahitya Akadami, New Delhi, in its series *Makers of Indian Literature*, thus fills the vacuum in our knowledge about the life of this poet-historian who has left a deep impact on the history and literature of Kashmir.

Kalhana describes Kashmir of his time as a country which delighted in insurrection that was exploited by the military leaders and adventurers to their own advantage. His father, Campaka, occupied one of the highest offices in King Harsha's court. He was the Dvarapati, the Lord of the Gate, that is the commandant of the frontier defences. Yet Kalhana did not hold any office under the rulers though his uncle, Kanaka, ingratiated himself into the favour the heartless iconoclast, Harsha, who had brought misery on his people and ruin to the country.

It appears Kalhana did not relish being in the service of rulers for whom he did not have any esteem. He, no doubt, had access to the court which enabled him to have an insight into the affairs of the State and report on them first-hand. Kalhana was not like other Pandits of his time who placed their talent at the feet of their rulers. He had his own ideas about the role of a historian. He said : "That man of merit deserves praise whose language, like that of a judge, in recounting the events of the past, has discarded bias as well as prejudice". It goes to his credit that Kalhana lived up to the standard he had set for his tribe. Though he does not write disparagingly about Jayasimha in whose time he lived, he does not shower any praise on him either.

POETIC GENIUS

Kalhana was essentially a poet and history came in handy to put his poetic genius in to practice. Yet his achievement as historian outlived his fame as a poet. If our medieval history has been preserved for posterity it is in large measure due to the poetic frame in which it was cast.

It is evident from his writings that Kalhana had no admiration for the valour of the Kashmiris of his time. He had nothing but contempt for the military leadership and the soldiery. He has contemptuously mentioned of their empty bragging and lack of physical and moral courage. Writing about their military acumen he says: "They melted away like a dog, hiding his dagger which bore the semblance to the tail, when confronted by the Turks."

Kalhana had an acutely sensitive and impressionable mind. He felt disgusted with too many instances of treachery that he came across among the warring princes. The boorishness of feudal tyrants is exposed by Kalhana, as also the oppressive nature of petty officials. His chronicle evinces the concern and feeling that Kalhana had for the poor and the underdog who, he said, had to subsist on rice and *haakh*.

However, the patriot in Kalhana was in deep love with the sylvan valley, its tall snow-capped mountains, green meadows, limpid brooks and crystal lakes. Yet he does not tire us with the tawdry description of seasons or scenery which had been overworked by his predecessors. Kalhana's mention of flora and fauna of India which were not normally found in Kashmir indicates his wide contacts, and his references to ancient Indian lore and mythology exhibit his wide knowledge of the classics. He liberally drawn upon the great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* more often the later. He was equally influenced by Bana (*Harshacharitra*) and Bilhana (*Mankadevacharitra.*)

MINUTE DESCRIPTION

Kalhana had an acutely observant eye. He gives us a minute description of the local customs, mode of dress, food habits, the relationship between man and woman, their problems and solutions. He portrays human foibles and failings and ridicules the upstarts for the crafty wiles and they adopt to climb the ladder to success. He has a restrained love for the dramatic. He uses similies, striking antithesis and figures of speech with discrimination. He exhibits keen poetic imagination while delineating an otherwise pedestrian theme in elegant and graceful form.

READABLE ACCOUNT

The historian in Kalhana has dug deep into the treasure-house of Kashmir's past which has become a source material for the reconstruction of Indian history. It is a pity that so little is known of the man behind this stupendous work. Prof. Dhar's life-sketch is a highly readable account of the great historian well produced. With a unthinkably low price of Rs. 2.50, this monograph should be in the hands of every Kashmiri and every student of history. However, within the compass of 85 pages, it is not possible to fathom the mind and thought of Kalhana the man. This requires a deeper and a more concentrated research by devoted scholars. Would it be too much to suggest that a chair be instituted for research on Kalhana or that the Kashmir Cultural Academy or the Sahitya Akadami sponsor research on this man of genius ? Even the Dharmarth Trust should get interested in researching on this poet-historian. Tons of literature have been produced on the Bard of Avon. We would be doing signal service to our cultural heritage by reconstructing the life of the narrator of the River of Kings.

2

Kalhana and the Rajatarangini

Somnath Dhar

India' distant past is blurred for lack of precise chronicles. In the whole period of Sanskrit literature, there is no writer who can be seriously regarded as critical historian. It is only after the sixth century of the Christian era that we get chronicles of illustrious rulers, such as Bana's **Harshacharita, Kalhana's Rajatarangini**, the **Ain-i-Akbari**, the **Akbarnama**, etc.

The Rajatarangini, or the **"River of Kings"**, by Kalhana Pandit, is the earliest extant history Kashmir. A unique historical poem, written between 1148 and 1150 A.D., **the Rajatarangini** contains valuable political, social and other information pertaining to Kashmir and the rest of India. In the words of H.G. Rawlison, it is "Hindu India's almost sole contribution to history." As far back as 1825. H.H. Wilson wrote in **Asian Researcher**, Vol., XV: "The only Sanskrit composition, yet discovered, to which the title of history can be applied, is the **Rajatarangini**, a history of Kashmir". Among the extant works of Sanskrit literature, Kalhana's Chronicle stands for its comparatively exact chronology. It has also offered the key for fixing the dates of many Indian scholars who wrote literary and philosophical works. Indeed, the Chronicle has contributed a good deal to the reconstruction of ancient Indian history.

KALHANA AND HIS TIME

Facts regarding Kalhana's person and contemporary life have been gleaned from his narrative by patient research. His father, Champaka, was a Kashmiri nobleman, who held the office of Lord of the Gate (**Duarpala**) or commandant of the frontier defences during the reign of the ill-fated King Harsha. Kalhana's ancestors were devout Shaivites, but he showed the deepest regard for Buddhism.

The major portion of Kalhana's life passed in what was for Kashmir one long period of civil war and political strife. The commencement of the twelfth century brought an important dynastic revolution in Kashmir which affected the political life of the country. King Harsha, whose reign (1089-1101 A.D.) initially secured prosperity and peace, became a victim of his own Neronian disposition. The landed aristocracy of the Damaras, harshly persecuted by him, rose in revolt against the King. Harsha was killed. The usurping brothers, Uchala and Sussala, partitioned the country. In his chronicle Kalhana speaks admiringly for his father, Champaka, though he does not share the latter's affection for his royal master, Harsha.

KALHANA AS HISTORIAN

Kalhana did not belong to that order of Brahmin Pandits or Kavis, who were compelled by poverty or ambition to lay their talents at the feet of vain monarchs. Kalhana's Chronicle is neither Voltaire's **History of Russia** nor Gibbon's **Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**. His was not only a serious contribution to history, it was pre-eminently a work of art (**Kauya**). He looked upon himself not merely as a historian but also as Kavi, a seer-poet. He considered poetry as an affectionate vehicle for the attainment of "special immortality", and paid glowing tributes to poets. R.S. Pandit compared Kalhana to Aeschyllus and Homer, "as a poet of a veracity and universality."

In Kalhana's pen pictures, the past of Kashmiris is gloriously vivified and recreated. It is his skill as a **Kavi**—the merit of his poetic composition—which has saved from oblivion the history of Kashmir. A **Kavya** (a Charita or heroic poem) in form and conception, the **Rajatarangini** consists of about 8,000 verses, classified under eight **Tarangas** (waves). It is, however, different from other **Charitas** because Kalhana has offered a connected narrative of the ruling dynasties of Kashmir from the earliest times down to his own. He embellished the Chronicle with occasional elaborate rhetorical ornaments.

As a chronicler, Kalhana preserved independence of judgement. He did not hesitate to point the error and weaknesses of the kings under whom he wrote. Kalhana emphasises striking examples of Kashmir history by reference to similar instances narrated in the **Mahabharata** or the **Ramayana**. At the same time, the poet's love of the Arcadian vale of Kashmir, abounding in nature's mysterious charms, is revealed in many an inspired passage.

Proper dates are given by Kalhana from the death of Chippata—Jayapida (813 A.D.) onwards. He follows the calendar used in the Lankhen era which had been used in Kashmir for many centuries. Historical events are shown to illustrate political maxims and precepts of diplomacy. The passages in which Kalhana gives in brief the principles of government adapted to Kashmir are particularly interesting.

There is no doubt that the extant text of the Chronicle is in the main the very same as Kalhana left it. Kalhana tells us that he began his work in the Saka year 1070 i.e. 1148 A.D. and he finished it in 1150 A.D. The record in the first three books covers an aggregate period of 3050 years and consists for the most part of bare dynastic lists of fifty-four reigns, in the anecdotes.

The first historical name in the Chronicle is that of King Ashoka—attested by Ashoka's famous pillar inscriptions. The historical existence of King Pravarasena, the founder of Srinagar, is borne out by his coins.

Among the Karkota kings, Muktapada Lalitaditya (699-736 A.D.) shines forth as a very powerful monarch whose sway extended far beyond Kashmir and adjacent territories. Kashmiris credit their king with having been victorious over the Turks. Lalitaditya's later conquest of the Bhauttas (or Tibetans) has been verified through Chinese annals. He led expeditions against the states of Kanyakubja (Kanauj), Kalinga (Orissa), Kamboja (Afghanistan) and Gauda (Bengal). With pardonable exaggeration, Kalhana describes him as the illustrious emperor-the terrestrial Indra."

ILLUSTRIOUS MONARCHS

Kashmiris celebrated Lalitaditya's victories for centuries and called him the universal monarch. Jayapida, fifth descendant of Lalitaditya, however, made a serious attempt to regain the lost supremacy of Kashmir. His romantic adventures took him to Bengal. He too, set out for "the conquest of the earth."

With the accession of the Avantivarman (855/6-883) A.D.) we enter that phase of Kashmir history of which the chronicle gives a truly historical record. The memory of Avantivarman is still kept green by the ruins of the temples at Avantipor, the town founded by the King. With Avantivarman's son and successor, Shankaravarman (833-902 A.D.) begins the line of kings whose reigns are evidenced by an unbroken series of coins.

The Tantrin soldiers, the Praetorian Guard of Kashmir, became all-powerful during the first quarter of the tenth century of the Christian era. The kingdom was a scene of misery and calamities. Like the Janisars of Ottoman rulers of Turkey, the Tantrins made and unmade kings at their pleasure. The court was corrupt and dissolute. The Tantrins were defeated by Chakravarman who regained the throne for the third time. In 950 A.D. in the person of Kshemagupta, once again Kashmir had a rapacious and licentious monarch. He married Didda, daughter of Simharaja, the Chief of Lohara-and thereby changed the course of history of Kashmir. Dida ruled first as Queen Mother and then as the Queen, after Kshemagupta's death. Driven by the lust for power, she ruled Kashmir with an iron hand for twenty-three years. Though cruel, unscrupulous and dissolute, she possessed statesmanlike sagacity and administrative ability. She was succeeded by the House of Lohara, the new dynasty, which continued to hold Kashmir as well as its original home till the time of Kalhana and later.

About half of the Chronicle (comprising nearly 3,450 **Shlokas**) is devoted by Kalhana to the half of the tweflth century which lies between the downfall of Harsha and the date of the composition of the Chronicle. This lengthy treatment has the advantage that an authentic contemporary picture of the social, political and economic aspects of Kashmir is presented. Rebel Damaras disturbed the peace of the country. Pretenders rose and fell. The people of Srinagar suffered a desperate siege, Jayasimha ruled over Kashmir with a cunning diplomacy and unscrupulous intrigue." The concluding stanzas of the Chronicle are devoted to the praise of Jayasimha's queen, Radda Devi and their children. That takes us to the twenty-second year of Jayasimha's reign, 1149-50 A.D. Kalhana concludes the poem with a verse comparing his chronicle the "River of Kings', with the swift current of the Godavari, a river of South India.

Rajatarangini is much more than an account of the reigns of the kings of Kashmir, Kalhana presents an authentic picture of his contemporary social and political life. The Chronicle is a vast mine of information about the past of Kashmir and the contiguous territories. It also contributes to the understanding of the chequered course of the history of Kashmir after Kalhana's day.

REVIVAL

During the Muslim period, Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470 A.D.) who attracted chroniclers and poets to his court and showed keen interest in Sanskrit though Parsian was the language of the court, had the **Rajatarangini** brought up-to-date, by the two famous chroniclers of his reign-Jonaraja and Mullah Ahmad, in Sanskrit and Perisan, respectively. The Sanskrit composition, called **Dvitiya Rajatarangini** (second Rajatarangini), is a mine of information for the period from 1150 A.D. to 1459 A.D., the year of Jonaraja's death. More than a century later, the **Rajatarangini** was again updated, during the rule of the Mughal Emperor Akbar, who also showed equal respect for classical Sanskrit literature. The task was entrusted by Akbar to Priya Bhatta in 1575 A.D. Abdul Fazal included a summary of the ancient chronicle of Kashmir in his **Ain-i-Akbari** and mentioned Kalhana as the source. In Jahangir's time, Malik Haider brought out an abridged edition of the Rajatarangini in Persian in 1617 A.D.

In modern times, Moorecroft, who arrived in Srinagar (during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1823 A.D.) had a manuscript of Kalhana's **Rajatarangini** prepared in Devanagari script from an old Sharada script. This became the basis of an edition of the **Rajatarangini** which was published in Calcultta under the auspices of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1835 A.D. Towards the end of century Pandit Durga Prasad (of Kashmir) brought out an edition of the chronicle, which was printed in Bombay. Thereafter, different critical editions appeared in English, German and French, until the well-known translations into English by Sir Aurel Stein in 1900 and by R.S. Pandit in 1935. The latter edition was reissued by Sahitya Akademi in 1968. That the Sahitya Akademi had to reprint the R.S. Pandit edition in 1976 shows the continuing popularity of the celebrated chronicle of Kashmir. It is just as well that two standard Hindi translations of the Rajatarangini, one by Pandey Ramtej Shastri and the other by G.K. Shastri, have appeared in recent years. As a matter of fact, translations of the Chronicle should appear in other Indian languages to, for thanks to Kalhana, Kashmir occupied the pride of place in India for having a comprehensive recorded history extending to thousands of years past.

3

Didda—Queen of Kashmir

J.N. Ganhar

Women have often played a considerable role in the political affairs of Kashmir in olden days. Their impact on policy-making and administration was made as powerful queen–consorts, as queen-regents and as rules in their own right. A remarkable women who acted all these roles, one after the other, was named Didda.

Didda Rani who dominated the political scene for half a century, lived through one of the most troubled periods of Kashmir's long and chequered history. And that she managed to weild effective control over this mountain girt territory for such a long time testifies to her astute political sense, her cleverness in intrigue, and her administrative capability.

Didda's mastery over Kashmir, spanning the second half of the tenth century A.D., forms an interesting chapter in the medieval history of the world renowned valley. But was not a Kashmiri by birth. She was the daughter of Simharaja, lord of Lohara and some other hilly principalities south of Poonch, whose difficult terrain conferred a certain amount of impregnability on them. On the mother's side she was the grand-daughter of Bhima Sahi, ruler of Gandhara, corresponding roughly to the present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province. Bhima appears to have been a powerful potentate of his time, for Kashmiri's native historian, Kalhaṇa describes him as "illustrious".

Didda was married to Ksemagupta, son of Parvagupta, an ambitious upstart who had occupied the Kashmir throne after killing the child-king, Sangramadeva. But the coveted prize which he got through foul treachery and gruesome murder was not to be his for long he died of dropsy within a year and half of his accession.

Ksemagupta ascended the throne in 950 A.D. on the death of his father. He too was not destined to hold it for long; he died in 958 A.D.

Didda was an extremely handsome girl but lame. She had to be carried on her back by a carrier-woman when she went to preside over games and sports.

That the Kashmir prince should have married a girl with such a severe physical handicap seems at first sight rather surprising. But when we remember how tenous was his homicide-father's claim to the throne it becomes easily intelligible that Ksemagupta should have welcomed the prospect if he did not actually seek it-of being linked with powerful and prestigious neighbouring chief who could come to his aid in case of need.

Ksemagupta was a licentious youth who, in the words of Kalhana, was given to dissipation with dice, wine and women. According to the Kashmir historian he was always surrounded by drunkards who plundered at gambling. The only other activity he was interested in was hunting, especially jackel-hunts. It was in fact a virulent fever caught on one such hunting spree that brought about his early death.

Ksemagupta's pre-occupation with drinking, debauchery and gambling left him little time to attend to affairs of State. He therefore welcomed it when his charming young wife started taking active interest in the administration of the kingdom. Imbued with a rich political and administrative background, Didda did not take long to make her mark and soon emerged in full control of the administration. Her profligate husband was completely engrossed in his enchanting and talented wife and left the administration completely in her hands. So much so that the coins were issued in both their names together. This earned him the contempt of his courtiers and subjects and they nicknamed him Didda-Ksema.

Didda's ascendancy during her husband's life-time was marked by her jealousy of the Prime Minister, Phalguna, because he gave his daughter Chandralekha in marriage to Ksemagupta. Didda's grandfather, Bhima Sahi, had a lofty Vishnu temple built at Bumzu, a mile north of the well known Martand springs on the Anantnag-Pahalgam road which attract thousands of devotees on solar eclipses, etc., and during the intercalary month to offer oblations to their departed ancestors. The temple, designated Bhimakesava, was, according to Dr. Aurel Stein later converted into a Muslim *ziarat*. He is disposed to think that it was richly endowed.

Ksemagupta's fast life was bound to lead to his early death and he passed away within just eight years of his accession to the throne. And when he died his child-son Abhimanyu was installed on the throne under the guardianship of his mother, Didda.

It was a custom in those days that on the death of a ruler his wives committed *sati*, i.e., they self-immolated themselves with their deceased husband. But Didda cleverly managed to escape this cruel fate through the last minute intercession of a faithful courtier through the senior minister Phalguna towards whom she was inimically disposed had readily given his assent.

Didda was hard put to it to maintain herself and her minor son in positions of power during the early years of Abhimanyu's reign. There was a devastating fire which destroyed a large part of the capital, including a number of big buildings. This was followed by dangerous uprising by some of the disgruntled relations and courtiers who had enlisted the support of the Brahman confederacy. Didda was in terrible straits, so much so that twice she was constrained to hide her child son in two different *mathas* or hospices. The Queen-regent had no longer available to her the wise counsel and services of the elder stateman Phalguna, for having been humiliated by the jealous queen, he had sought voluntary exile in Poonch. But Didda did not lose her nerve. She brought about a disruption in the ranks of her enemies by buying off with plenty of gold, the Brahmans who spearheaded the movement against her. This done, it did not take her long to tackle the other ring-leaders, and their chief supporters with bribes, etc. Yasodhara who was one of them was given the chief command of the army.

Didda was fickle-minded and suspicious. Accordingly there hardly was anyone who could retain her favour for long. The intrepid Yasodhara aroused her suspicion because he led a successful expedition against a neighbouring Sahi chief Thakkana. Didda therefore sought to be rid of him. But when she attempted to banish him, there was a fresh rebellion by his former associates and supporters and the queen was besieged in her palace. She was however, saved by the timely arrival of the faithful minister, Naravahana and some other supporters. Thus secured, Didda took terrible revenge by mercilessly executing all captured rebels and exterminating their families.

Naravahana, who now became Didda's chief councillor, did also not enjoy for long the fickle queen's confidence and favour. He was subjected to insults and humiliation before all and sundry and this ultimately drove this self respecting adherent into suicide. But this encouraged Didda s opponents to create fresh trouble less and to successfully tackle with them she recalled, Phalguna once again. About this time Abhimanyu passed away.

Didda was a woman of easy virtue. This made the noble prince very unhappy and miserable. So much so that he got consumption of which he died soon after in early autumn in 972 A.D.

He was followed on the throne by his son Nandigupta with Didda as guardian. Sorrow over the death of her beloved son softened for a time the heart of the queen-regent and she launched upon the construction of numerous sacred foundations to make amends for her misdeeds and to perpetuate the memory of her son and husband. Kalhana ascribes to her as inany as sixty-four temples and other buildings. One of the structures, built in her own name, was designated Diddaranatha. This has given its name to Didamar quarter of Srinagar, situated between Nawa Kadal and Safa Kadal on the right bank of the Vitasta.

Didda appears to have been a Vaishnavite Hindu, as she built a number of Vishnu temples. One of these built in memory of her deceased son was named Abhimanyusvamin in what is now the Bemina quarter of present-day Srinagar. Two other Vishnu Temples built in her own name were known as Diddasvamin. These too were in the capital. One of them was built of white stones, possibly marble. She is stated to have installed a number of Vishnu images at the confluence of the Vitasta Sindh at Shadipore where the Hindus of Kashmir immerse the ashes of their dead.

Didda's zeal in the contribution of temples and other pious foundations throws interesting light on the Kashmir of her day.

Through the Kashmir court was a hot-bet of intrigue and depravity the valley continued to be a reputed seat of Buddhist and Sanskrit lore, and attracted scholars and aspirants from different parts of India. Thus one of the Diddasvamin temples in the city had attached to it a matha or hospice for the residence of people from Madhyadesa Lata and Saudotra *i.e.*, from the tract of land extending from the Arabian Sea in the west to western Uttar Pradesh in the east. Another **matha** or hospice of Brahmans from outside was built near the temple of Simhasvamin which she built in memory of her father Simharaja. A number of buildings were put at the confluence of the Vitasta and the Sindh at Shadipore. A Buddhist vihara with a large quadrangle was also built to house outside and native Buddhists. Not only this, the queen enclosed in stone walls all the temple the surrounding walls of which had been burned down. Following her example, Valga, a porter-woman who used to carry the lame queen at games which required running, built the Valgamatha. Though its exact location in the city cannot be established, it clearly indicates that religious foundation to acquire spiritual merit continued to be created by some commoners also.

Didda's religious enthusiasm lasted but one year. At the end of it she got rid of her grandson, Nandigupta, "by witchcraft". In the same way she disposed of, in the year 975 A.D., another grandson. Tribhuvara who had succeeded Nandigupta. There now remained only one more grandson, Bhimagupta, who succeeded Tribhuvanagupta. Didda, however, continued to be the guardian and virtual ruler.

During the five years of Bhimagupta's nominal reign Phalguna died and the queen threw off all restraint in her personal conduct. Tunga, a herdsman from the hills of Poonch, who had found his way into Kashmir as a letter-carrier, gained the queen's favour and became her paramour.

Assured of the support of Tunga, who was a valiant hill man Didda had Bhimagupta put to death by torture early in 981 A.D. and ascended the throne in her own right. During the reign of twenty-three years which followed, Tunga, who had been made the Prime Minister, maintained an undisputed predominance.

Tunga's elevation to the office of the chief minister was natural by not to the liking of the former ministers and they tried to raise a rebellion. They met together and decided to invite Didda's nephew, Vigraraja to head the revolt. On arrival, this valiant prince who was the son of Didda's brother, enlisted the support of the Brahmans by making them enter upon a solemn fast in order to cause disturbance in the kingdom. The Brahmans did so and the people were in uproar and sought for Tunga in different places for a number of days. But Didda carefully hide him and in the meantime she won over the Brahmans by presents of gold and bribes and the fast ended, Vighraraja therefore returned home from where he again made an attempt to make the Brahmans enter upon a fast but in vain. For Tunga knew their weakness for gold and bribes and could easily get over them.

Once secure in his position, Tunga ruthlessly exterminated all his opponents who had dared to raise the banner of revolt. The Brahmans who had accepted bribes were not left alone; they were throne into prison.

Tunga's prestige received a tremendous boost by a successful military expedition undertaken against the ruler of Rajouri, the ancient Rajapuri. Its ruler, Prithvipala, whom Kalhana describes as "valiant" had shown some arrogance following the death of Phalguna. Thereupon the other Kashmir ministers led an expedition against him. Prithvipala attacked the Kashmir force in a narrow defile and routed it, destroying some of the ministers and inflicting grievous injuries on the others. Tunga then went by a different route alongwith his brothers and burned it (Rajapuri) down completely. By this diversion the ruler of Rajouri was defeated and the surviving Kashmir forces extricated from defile. Prithvipala then paid tribute to the Kashmir ruler and Tunga triumphantly returned to Kashmir. Queen Didda rewarded her paramour by making him the commander-in-chief and Tunga exterminated hosts of Damaras, powerful estate holders who from time to time had opposed him.

But for this successful military expedition Didda's rule as queen in her own right is not distinguished by any other notable exploit or achievements, civil or military. She was, however, able to bequeath the throne to her family in undisputed succession. This she ensured by making a careful selection of her successor, from among the children of her brother, Udayaraja, ruler of Lohara, The rule of Kashmir thus passed, on her death in 1003 A.D., without any contest or controversy to the new dynasty, the house of Lohara.

4

Suyya—The Mediaeval Engineer of Kashmir

S. N. Dhar

> *"Neither Kasyapa nor Samkarsana had conferred benefits such as were conferred with ease on this realm by Suyya of meritorious acts. The reclamation of the land from water, the bestowal of it to pious Brahmans, the building of barrages with stones in water and the suppression of Kaliya, which were achieved by Vishnu in four incarnations of righteous acts, were achieved by Suyya, who had a mass of religious merits, in a single birth only."*
>
> *—Rajatarangini*

Years ago, Lalitaditya Muktapida had deepened the bed of the Vitasta (the Jhelum) in the vale of Kashmir. The great Emperor had also many canals dug out from the Vitasta. After him kings of little virility and vision ruled the Valley. More and more lands were submerged under the water as the bed of the Vitasta rose in the course of many decades. The people were unhappy.

Avantipura was the capital of Kashmir. The town was spread out round the two magnificent temples, Avantiswami and Avantesvara—

their noteworthy ruins, found 13 miles above Srinagar, on the roadside, attract the tourist even today. They stand under the foot of a towering craggy mountain, on a rising plateau that flanks the Vitasta and commands a fine, broad view of the fields, uplands and the encircling ranges of mountains. Here lived the kings of Kashmir, Avantivarman (857-884 A.D.) The great builder of temples, a saint-monarch.

His courtiers and ministers sat about him as he gazed out of the window. "There, you see the inundated fields," sadly remarked Avantivarman, "the Vitasta creeps over more fields like a devouring serpent. We did much for our people. But how can we rid them of this menace, which is starving them now?"

"Sire," replied the Prime Minister, Sura, "Your Majesty has had so many canals dug. Others, blocked up during scores of years of misrule, when kings and queens were more concerned with their palace intrigues than with the welfare of the people, have been cleared. What more can we do?"

"Something has to be done," persisted the king, "yearly the Vitasta is rising, overflowing cultivated lands and submerging riverside towns, villages and hamlets."

"Sire," rejoined the minister Prabhakarvarman, "the price of a Khari of paddy has risen to 250 Dinnaras."

The king fell a-thinking.

The poet Anandavardhana broke the silence, after a while, "Sire, in Parihaspura I heard of a man who has been saying for years, "I have a plan to save Kashmir from floods. I would work it out if I had the resources !" People say he is a madman."

Avantivarman was interested and said, "Tell us more about him."

"I know no more, Sire", confessed Anandavardhana, "but I can have the man traced."

Suravarman, the Yuvaraja, supplied the information: "Sire, the man is a Brahman, Suyya. They say he wasn't born of a woman's womb. A Candala woman, named Suyya, found a baby in a dust heap, sucking its thumb in a new earthen pot which had a lid on. The lustrous-eyed babe was a not polluted by her with her touch. She had it brought up by a Sudra wet nurse and she gave her own name to the baby. The boy, as he grew up, picked up the Vedas and other learning very precociously. Now he fasts and bathes a lot and leads a very religious life. He goes about saying he has a plan to do away with the floods of the Vitasta. People, as Anandavardhana said, call him mad."

"Very interesting," commented Avantivarman.

"Sire," observed Sura, who was thinking out his opinion so far, "I too have heard about this man Suyya. People's reports and facts may not agree. We cannot be sure that the man is crazy, unless we know better."

"Precisely, that is what we feel. Send out your men, Sura, and find out where Suyya is. Let him be granted an audience before us."

In a few days Suyya was present in the court. The courtiers passed whispering remarks about his strange appearance: he was a very handsome youth with the large lotus eyes they had heard of. The lustre of chastity shone bright on his face. He looked like a scholar. There was something extremely individual about him. As he talked to the king in his masculine voice, a silence fell on the court.

To the king's question, he replied, "Sire, it's true that all these years I have been saying that I have a plan to drain the Valley. For the present, give me only two pots of Dinnaras. With that I will bring down the flood waters by one-third volume."

"He is crazy," the courtiers broke him short.

"Crazy or no !" rang Suyya's voice. "Trust me with the money I want, great Maharaja. See the result, Sire, I am not a robber to run away with people's money."

Sura for once did not know what to say. He fidgeted his fingers, and thought.

Avantivarman gave his decision: "Suyya, you will have the two pots of Dinnaras. Our men will go with you."

There was a commotion in the court-room as Suyya, accompanied by a few soldiers, left bowing three times, walking backwards, with folded hands and looking towards the throned monarch.

In Madhavarajya (now Maraz, the part of the Valley on either side of the Jhelum above Srinagar), Suyya dropped one pot of

Dinnaras in a flooded village, Nandaka, where the water was logged up. The Maharaja's men thought that Suyya was indeed crazy.

Then Suyya cruised down the Vitasta to Kramarajya (now Kamraz, the part of the Valley on either side of the Jhelum, below Srinagar), and dropped the other vessel of Dinnaras near Yaksodara in the Vitasta, at a point where, in course of time boulders, fallen from the mountaineous banks had blocked up the neck of the river with the result that the current of the river had been reversed and water flowed back into the Valley, inundating farm, field, garden and town.

At this time many people starved due to scarcity and high prices of foodstuffs. The famished and unemployed peasants living about Nandaka and Yaksodara heard of the pots of Dinnaras being dropped into the water. Afloat on inflated skins, they braved the boulders to extract the Dinnaras. They dug up boulders in the process and these were pushed down by the force of the water. When that happened, some of the water resumed its natural course. Indeed, by this process, the Valley was being drained to one-third the volume of lake and river water. All around the low-lying area, dry land appeared as the level of the river dropped overnight.

Avantivarmana and his ministers saw the working of the 'miracle'. They did not call Suyya crazy or the like any longer. Suyya did not heed or love applause. His plans were now bringing fruits after all. That was all mattered with him. When much of the food water was drained, he had a huge dam constructed; thus he locked the entire Vitasta for a week. In the meanwhile, by the organised use of labour of hundreds of men,, the bed of the Vitasta was cleared and boulders were removed from where the river rolled down between precipices. Stone embankments were constructed to hold back rolling boulders.

The dam was removed. The mad waters leaped down furiously. The Vitasta was finally cleared of obstacles.

"Covered with mud and a sparkle with fish, the land when stripped of water appeared like the vault of the sky which when free from clouds displays the gloom of darkness and is full of stars."

No one was more pleased at the success of Suyya than the munificent Avantivarman who freely provided him with money and resources for his countrywide engineering enterprises. Suyya was appointed the royal engineering. Highest honours were conferred on him by the king who regarded him highly for his meritorious life of chastity and learning.

New channels were opened out from the Vitasta into the dry interior where 'the rains came' precariously. "With several canals thrown out from the original main stream", sings, Kalhana, "the river shone like a black female snake with numerous hoods resting on one body. The site of the confluence of the Sindhu and the Vitasta was changed by Suyya. The alteration was planned to the general good of irrigation. Indeed, he made the various streams, whose undulating ripples were their tongues, take to any course at his own pleasure like a charmer of the female snakes."

Next, the dynamic Suyya turned his attention to Mahapadma (Wular) lake—the largest fresh water lake in India—into which the Vitasta flows. At the point where the Vitasta left the lake, the bed was dredged, with the result that the Vitasta "emerged on her course with swiftness like an arrow from the mechanism of the bow." Through mile-long dykes, much of the rich surrounding land, that was submerged under water, was reclaimed; all types of villages were founded. For miles around the lake, which seemed to stretch to the horizons, Suyya founded a sanctuary and prohibited the killing of birds and fishes. His idea apart from its humanitarian aspects, was to preserve wild life and the feathered inhabitants of the land.

One the banks of the Vitasta where she emerges from the Mahapadma lake, Suyya founded the prosperous town, Suyyapura (now Sopore) after his name. He founded Suyya Kundala in memory of the woman whose name he bore. In her name he also constructed Suyya Bridge. The philanthropic monarch, Avantivarman, founded many a new town and village that grew up when more and more canals from the Vitasta spread across the Valley. Sura founded Surapura.

Wherever the banks of the Vitasta were vulnerable, strong stone embankments were constructed. Suyya determined the exact period at which each and every village would require irrigation. With indefatigable energy, Suyya recorded the extent and distribution of canal water on a permanent basis. Kashmiri farmers for the first time, achieved the prosperity that was never before known by them. Paddy grew in such abundance that, in the lifetime of Suyya, its price per *Khari* fell from two hundred and fifty to thirty-six Dinnaras.

5

"Benevolent Badshah"

Prof. K. N. Dhar

In the domain of chronicle-writing, contemporary evidence is of immense value and utmost importance. This kind of very rare ingredient in building the history worth credence, also imports purpose and meaning into it, more so, it saves the bother of hair-splitting argumentation, unnecessary kite-flying and drawing inferences which may not be correct always.[1] Fortunately for us here in Kashmir, chronicle-writing has been an uninterrupted pastime with our Sanskrit poets. Kalhana, Jona Raja, Shrivara, Prajya Bhatta and Shuka have groomed their imaginative, yet intellectual prowess in making this stream (*Tarangini*) of history-writing flow with measured rhythm without any break whatsoever. Their delineation of historical events does not border on exaggeration or hyperbole, because the pioneer in this form of literary expression, Kalhana, had already established the guide-lines for those votaries of muse who would elect to narrate historical events. Without mincing words, he observes :

> *"That noble-minded poet is alone worthy of praise, whose word like that of a Judge, keeps free from love or hatred in relating the facts of the past."*[2]

The stalwarts, while interpreting past in terms of the present, have followed this dictum with admirable tenacity. Unlike Kalhana

Jona Raja while recording the attainments of King Zain-ul-Abidin had no such predicament of recollecting past for unfolding it in the living present. He was a contemporary of this illustrious King of Kashmir and had been commissioned to undertake this stupendous assignment at his bidding.[3]

It may be contended that the poet being in the pay of the King his dispassionate observation of the events having become a pawn to Royal munificence, he, out of fear or out of gratefulness even, could not afford to pen down anything which would be termed derogatory about his patron. In the first instance, we can call a host of instances from his narrative wherein he has dealt digs at the King when he failed to come up to his ideals.[4] Secondaly, the facts given by him are corroborated by Persian historians like Syed Ali (*Tarikh-i-Kashmir 1579 A.D.*)[5] Mirza Mehdi (*Baharistan Shashi* 1586-1614 A.D.)[6] Hyder Malik Chadura (*Tarikh-i-Kashmir* 1620 A.D.)[7] and others in letter and spirit. None of these authors could claim royal patronage and were actually independent thinkers. Confirmation of the events given by Jona-Raja, by such towering personalities of Persian literature leaves nothing to guess about. Thirdly, Jona Raja's "Judge-like" assessment of historical events can be proved by the fact that he has spared no pains in placing praise where it is due. Even though Shahmir's (Shams-ud-Din) reign ranging from 1339-1342 A.D. was a hot-bed of court-intrigues, as also averse to the co-religionists of Jona Raja, yet he has lauded his administrative acumen profusely.[8] In the same manner. Sultan Shahab-ud-Din (1354-1373) had not only razed the temples to the ground but also given the Hindus a veritable head-ache, yet Jona Raja has applauded him at many places without any reservations whatsoever.[9] Therefore it goes without saying that the account about Muslim rule in Kashmir as given by Jona Raja is not only honest but also unbiased. Even though groaning under social injustices until the emergence of "Budshah", he has neither become sentimental nor blinded with prejudice. Jona Raja (1389-1459 A.D.) took up the thread from the point at which Kalhana had left it.[10] He has woven a graphic panorama of the ups and downs in Kashmir History with rainbow-coloured dexterity. And without any ambiguity, he has also accepted Kalhana as his model.[11]

Zain-ul-Abidin ascended the throne of Kashmir for the second time permanently in 1420 A.D. Prior to this he has had a brief honeymoon with regal splendour which could not perpetuate when his elder brother Ali Shah went back on his word.[12] This savant-king inherited all the calumny which his father had fostered by his iconoclastic attitude towards some of his subjects. Therefore the political and social climate at the time he took up the reigns of the government in his hands, was neither flattering nor propitious.[13] However, through the alchemic touch of human understanding, he tried to heal the wounds said to have been inflicted on the people by his predecessors. He strove hard to rehabilitate them in terms of their status, rights and privileges. This unparalleled bold step in the context of narrow parochial loyalties reigning supreme at that time could have endangered his life, but his benevolent attitude could not be thwarted in any way. He did not deviate from that path he had chosen for the weal of the underdog. Kashmir thus regained its pristine glory and health in every sense of the word. Consequently, this peerless king has earned the right to be ranked with such eminent personages of Kashmir History as Pravarsena II (6th Century A.D.)[14], Lalitaditya (8th century A.D.)[15] and Avanti Varman (855–883 A.D.)[16].

When the regal authority changed hands his first concern was to fend his fences. Therefore, he adopted the policy of negotiated peace, not out of weakness, but through his strength of armed forces[17]. After the dust of intrigues and underhand manoeuvering had settled down by his superb statesmanship, an era of stability was ushered in, which is an inevitable foreground on which the progress of a country can be securely built. For this purpose in view, he appointed his brother Mohamad Khan as his supreme-adviser whom Jona Raja[18] calls as the "King without Royal Parasol". The king made a happy compromise between unrelenting sternness and convenient leniency for giving his people a stable government punctuated with peace and prosperity.[19]

Secondly, he devised veritable means for restoring confidence in the hearts of those who left neglected and oppressed. He reduced the payment of "Jizya" from 192 Mashas of silver to nominal denomination of only one "Masha" for non-Muslims which was not also strictly enforced.[20] Thereafter he started 'Langars' for feeding Brahmins at Bijbehara, Baramulla and Sopore,[21] So that this section of the population would feel itself equal in law and social justice, Shrivara, Jona Raja's successor in historiography, has referred to an arrangement for free-meal at Triphara place of pilgrimage at the foot of Mahadeva mountain, which eloquently establishes the enthralling charisma of his benevolence amongst his successors,[22] presumably being obliged to continue this endowment by the irresistible force of public opinion built brick by brick by Budshah in his own time.

Thirdly, he found opportunities for harnessing talent of Hindus which had been left unused in the kingdom for long. For this purpose he appointed Shriya Bhatta as the justice of peace, Tilaka and Sinha as the Accountants-General of his kingdom[23]. Karpura Bhatta was elevated to the Council of Ministers[24] and Ruyya Bhatta made Royal astrologer. The sermons given by Ramananda for propagating "Bhakti movement" were not banned but relished with gusto.[25] The king also provided equal facilities to the Budhists to profess their religion openly and made the Buddhist Scholar Tilakcharya the "Diwani Kule"[26] of his state.[27]

Fourthly, the king being an astute monarch initiated many projects to popularize Sanskrit as a classical language. By giving fillip to the "Divine tongue" as believed by the Hindus, he purchased their loyalty with no investment worth mentioning. He ordered the translation of Kalhana's Rajatarangini, "Ramayana" of Valmiki and Vyasa's "Mahabharatta" to be made in Persian. For this he established a "Darual-Ulum" at Nawshera, and Mulla Kabir Nahvi Sheich-ul-Islam was appointed as its Rector. Other Persian scholars inducted into it were Mulla Ahmed Kashmiri, Mulla Hafiz Bagdadi, and Mulla Yussuf Rashidi etc. who were commissioned to undertake the translation work of Arabic and Sanskrit books into Persian and vice-versa. The celebrated romance of "Yusuf Zulekha" in Persian was translated by Shrivara into Sanskrit[28]. In addition to this he encouraged the study of Sanskrit independently in the wake of which Jagatdhar Bhatt wrote his "*Stuti Kusumanjali*", Sitikantha his "*Bala Bodhini*" *and Varad-Raja his "Shivasutravartika*"—treaises dealing with the Hindu beliefs and religious tents. Many biographies of the kind came also to be written in Sanskrit e.g., Yodhabatta's "*Zaina Prakasha*" and Bhatta Vattar's "*Zaina Vilas*" *etc.*[29] The epitaphs on the graves were ordered to be written in Persian as well as in Sanskrit in Sharda Script.[30] Not only this, he salvaged, renovated and handed back to the Hindus many of their shrines.[31] By the Royal decree of the Sultan, Shriya Bhatta was authorized to reconstruct the dilapidated temples and "Dharamshalas"[32] in every district of the State.

To win the hearts of his Hindu subjects, he constructed replicas of "Martand" and "Amarnatha" temples, the domes of which would appears to kiss the high sky[33]. He is reported to lend his ear to the recitation of Hindu Religious literature and lore[34].

Jona Raja was not destined to pen down the whole gamut of his patron's rule. He breathed his last just eleven years before the sultan's tragic end, when his brother—Mohamad Khan—the devoted companion and his other well wishers and died leaving him forlorn. His sons did not behave as they should have, hence the Sultan did not find any charm in leading such as destitute life. He died on Friday, 12th May 1470 A.D.[35] and was laid to rest with his parent at Mazari-Salatin, Zainakadal, Srinagar.

Jona Raja closes his narrative abruptly after paying this complement to Sultan Budshah :

> "He planted such sugar-cane stalks in the suburban land of Martand, for the sweetness of which even the ambrosial rays of Moon are no match."[36]

It was left to Shrivara to cover the reign of the Sultan for his closing eleven years.[37]

The arresting aroma of his benevolent reign inspires and sustains the true human values of a Kashmiri up-to-date. He does not stray into the labyrinth of communal virus from which he cannot extricate himself. Zain-ul-Abidin Budshah is such a luminous lighthouse of tolerant Kashmiri culture, the effulgence of which will never get eroded. It has permeated deep into the marrow of a Kashmiri.

Therefore it seems quite in the fitness of things for Jona Raja to elaborate that :

> *"Lofty and squarely executed compassion became the beloved of the king, who had a captivating physique and a conduct work emulation.":*[38]

Note :

As narrated by Jona Raja and Supplemented by Shrivara. Excerpts from a Research Paper by the author.

1. e.g. Dr. Sankalia, "The Times of India' dated October 11, 1975, Mr. Oak's observations about 'The Tajmahal' and other Mughul

monuments.

2. Kalhana's Raja Tarangini I, 7; Translation Dr. M.A. Stein.
3. Jona Raja's Raja sTarangini edited by Dr. Ragu Nath Singh, 1972, Verse 5.
4. Ibid, Verse 792 etc.
5. MSS No. 739, Research Library, Srinagar.
6. Microfilm in Research Library, Srinagar, MSS No. 509, British Museum London.
7. Microfilm in Research Library, Srinagar, MSS No. 202. (Catalogue India Office, Library, London, 405, 410, 413).
8. Jona Raja-Raja Tarangini Verse 314
9. 405, 410, 413 Ibid.
10. Ibid, Verse 5.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid, 710, 711.
13. Ibid-Verses 314, 462 etc.
14. Kalhana, Raj Tarangini-III, 278-378
15. Ibid-IV, 126-371.
16. Ibid-V, 2-126.
17. Ibid-Verse 576.
18. Ibid-Verse 760.
19. Ibid-Verse 765.
20. Ibid-Verse 817
21. Ibid-Verse 881
22. Zaina-Tarangini I, 402.
23. Jona Raja's Raja Tarangni Verse 824.
24. Ibid Verses 826, 827.
25. Ibid Verse 828.
26. The exact word in Sanskrit is "Mahattama" the 'Highest office'. Persian scholars and historians have translated it as "Diwanikula".
27. Tarikhui Kashmir of Hyder Malik Chadura.
28. Zaina Tarangini-I-5; 88–108.
29. Ibid I, 5. 79–88.
30. Ibid, 1, 3, 46–52.

31. Ibid Jona Raja's Raja Tarangini Verse 449.
32. Ibid Verse 889.
33. Ibid Verse 874.
34. Zaina Tarangini I, 7, 224.
35. Zaina-Tarangini I, 7, 224.
36. Jona Raja's Raja Tarangini Verse 974.
37. Zaina Tarangini I, 2, 25.
38. Jona Raja' Raja Tarangini, Verse 951.

6

Vasugupta (800–850 A.D.)

Amongst the writers on Kashmir Saivism so far known to us, Vasugupta is, probably, the first. He was as great Maharsi who lived in retirement in the charming valley of what is now called the Har van stream (the ancient Sastarhavana) behind the Salimar Garden near Srinagar. Nothing is known either about his parentage or his ancestry. He was a great devotee of Siva. When he was living in a hermitage on the Mahadeva Peak in Kashmir, Lord Shiva appears to have revealed the Sivasutras to him in a dream. It is also known that Kailata was his direct disciple.

The date of Vasugupta can be approximately determined by certain references to him. There is, besides, a reference to Kallata by Kalhana to the effect that he was a great Siddha or a person who had attained realisation along with others. It is stated therein that Kallata lived during the time of king Avantivarman who ruled in Kashmir during the second half of the 9th century A.D. So the date of Vasugupta, his guru, can be placed at the commencement of the 9th century A.D. or the end of the previous century. The guruparampara furnished in the commentary of the Saradatilaka indicates that Vasugupta was the founder of Kashmir Saivism after Lord Shiva and that Abhinavagupta was the fourth disciple in succession from him. Since the date of Abhinavagupta is known to be the latter half of the 10th century and first quarter of the 11 the century A.D., the date of Vasugupta can be arrived at by computing backwards. On the basis of this also his date almost coincides with the one already mentioned namely the early part of the first half of the 9th century A.D.

The authorship of about five works, in all, is ascribed to Vasugupta. The first of them is the Sivasutras which are of divine origin as we have already seen. The work is divided into three chapters called Prakasas dealing in succession, with the three paths to final emancipation. There are altogether 79 Sutras of which 23 are in the first, 10 in the second and the rest in the third. The work is printed in Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies (Vol. XLII) along with the Vartika of Varadaraja.

The sutras are framed in the form of Vedic commandments which are composed in the style of the Upanisads and it is believed that they are of divine authorship. Though there is algebraic conciseness in the form in which they have been composed, the truths have been expressed with precision. The first chapter contains a description of the general characteristic of the soul and deals with the impurities that envelop it in the worldly existence pointing out the general traits of the three stages of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep right up to the rise of Suddhavidya. In the second chapter the secrets of the mantras and the effort that should be directed towards a proper understanding of them are elucidated. The third chapter deals with the characterisitics of Anu, Maya and the Suddhayas and the final result of yoga after describing in detail the effect of pleasures and pains to the individual and the means of getting rid of them. The Sivasutras is the first work on Kashmir Saivism and contains the both principles and essential truths of that system of philosophy in the form of aphorisms. This is, probably, the starting point for the mass of literature that came to be written in the course of about six or seven centuries commencing from the 9th century A.D.

Spandakarikas is the name of the second work that is ascribed to Vasugupta by Ksemaraja as could be seen from one of his verses. But Utpala Vaisnava ascribes it to Kallata on the basis of an authority found in the Spandapradipika. The work is simply an amplification of the fundamental concepts of Kashmir Saivism in which particular attention is paid to the Spanda aspect of the system. It is also called Spandasutra or more popularly Spandasastra.

Spandamrta' is the name of the third work that is ascribed to Vasugupta. It is stated that it is a separate work of Vasugupta without mentioning any authority therefore. The word Spandamrta seems to have been used more in a metaphorical sense according to Ksemaraja. Even Kallata uses the word Spandamrta in the same sense as Ksemaraja.

The last two works which are ascribed to Vasugupta are (1) Vasavitika which is commentary on the Bhagavadgita and (2) Siddhantacandrika. A complete manuscript of the former has not yet been discovered. The first six chapters are probably mixed up in another commentary on the Bhagavadgita called Lasaki written by Rajanaka Lasaka, the manuscripts of which are, however, available. The latter work is noticed by Dr. Buhler.

There are several commentaries on the Sivasutras of Vasugupta. They are all written by well-known Kashmirians like Ksemaraja, Varadaraja and Bhaskara. The most authoritative and popular of these is that of Ksemaraja which is called the Sivasutravimarsini, printed in the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies (Vol. X). The commentary of Varadaraja is called Sivasutravartika. The date of Varadaraja is not definitely known. But the interpretation of the sutras in his vartika is different from that of Bhaskara, another commentator of repute of his Sivasutras. Spandasandohais the name of the commentary of Ksemaraja on the first verse of the Spandakarika. It gives the purport of the entire work of Vasugupta. The commentry of Bhaskara on the Sivasutras is also called Sivasutravartika. There is still another commentary called Sivasutravartika on the Sivasutras; but the name of the commentator is not known. It is probably an abstract of the commentary of Ksemaraja as every word of it is found interspersed in the Vimarsini. Kallata, Ramakantha and Utpalavaisnava have also written commentaries on the Spandakarika of Vasugutpa.

Many stories are told about how Vasugupta, the originator of Kashmir Saivism, got at these Sivasutras. One of them is recorded in the Sivasutravimarsini as follows:

> Vasugupta, according to it, had one night, while living in his hermitage on the Mahadeva Peak, a dream in which Lord Siva, who was moved to own passion when he saw the world submerged in spiritual darkness, appeared and disclosed the fact of the existence of certain sutras inscribed on a rock which was at that time lying in a certain part of the fertile valley of Kashmir with the inscribed side

downwards. The Lord appears to have told him that the rock would turn over by his very. touch, he further commenced him to learn the sutras and teach them to worthy pupils who would spread their purports of the suffering people in a proper manner. The rock exists even now in Kashmir by the name Sankarpal (from the Sanskrit word Sankaropala meaning the rock of Sankara). The sutras found on the rock are, according to the version given by Ksemaraja, the very ones which have now been printed. Kallata lends supports to this anecdote. He, in turn, taught the sutras which he learnt from his teacher Vasugupta to his pupils and instructed them to preach the essentials of the doctrines to the suffering humanity. This version is corroborated by Bhaskara who further states that Kallata got from his teacher four divisions of the system on the first three of which he wrote the commentary called Madhuvathini and on the last one a commentary called the Tattvarthacintamani.

A different version of this story, however, is recorded at least by three writers namely Rajanaka Rama or Ramakantha (author of the Spandavivrti), Utpala (son of Trivikrama and the author of Spandapadipika) and Bhaskara (son of Divakara and author of Sivasutravartika). According to Utpala's version the Sivasutras appear to have been taught to Vasugupta by a Sidha. Whatever may be the stories that are current regarding the origin of the Sivasutras, it is learnt that Vasugupta got them directly from Lord Siva. In the account given by Bhaskara referred to in the previous paragraph there is a mention of the word Trika. It may not be the name of the system but it may refer to the three divisions into which the Sivasutras were divided. These divisions probably from the basis of the Spandasutras or Karikas.

7

Life-Sketch of Abhinava Gupta*

Prof. K.N. Dhar

Abhinava Gupta has been extolled as "Mahamahesvara" by the subsequent Kashmiri authors, his disciples, and admirers, which precisely means the "great devotee of siva" or the "Supreme-self" in Shaivistic parlance. Kashmiri tradition also is unequivocal in testifying to his versatility. He wrote on philosophy (Saiva-Darshan, commentary on Bhagvad Gita), commented upon Anandavardhan's "Dhvanayaloka". Bharata's "Natya Shastra", thus epitomized in himself the diverse talents of a philosopher, rhetorician and a critic on dramaturgy. Moreover, on Ksemendra's testimony, we know that he himself studied literature (Sahitya) with such a learned Guru.[1] His command over rhetorics was so enthralling that Mammatta the reputed author of "Kavya Prakash" out of veneration for his erudition in the subject refers to him as "Abhinavagupta pada.[2] Pada is added to the names to show great respect.[3] Vamana, the propounder of Riti school in Indian Rhetorics and commentator of "Kavya Prakasha" known as "Bala Bodhini" has alluded to Abhinava Gupta as "an intellectual giant and like a serpent (terror) to his young school fellows". This all goes to prove that Abhinava Gupta deserves these compliments fully as given to him by the Kashmiri tradition and literary authors as will be shown later. However, in Indian literary tradition two such names have come down to us. The first Abhinava

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*Excerpts from Author's "Glimpses of Kashmiri Culture" Series 1, 1975.

Gupta belongs to Kamarupa (Assam) and is a Sakta a worshipper of Shakti or Devi. The solitary reference made to him is by one Madhva in his "Shankara Digvijaya"[4] who also wrote a Shankar Bhashya, presumably on Badrayan's Vedanta Sutras. He was a contemporary of Shankaracharya who lived according to accepted opinion from 788 to 820 A.D. Abhinava Gupta of Assam was in the first instance antagonistic to the monistic theory as preached by Sankara, but having been defeated in the Shastrartha (interpretation of the scared lore) became his disciple. The Indologist of Dr. Aufrecht's calibre should not have made such a glaring mistake as to include "Shaktabhashya" among the works of Abhinava Gupta of Kashmir,[5] Perhaps the prefixes "Shakhta" and "Maheshwara" make all the difference between the two and this distinction has been made clear between the two even in early times.

Abhinava Gupta being a conscious artist was not averse to biography. He has given in the colophons of his various works, his genealogy and also some dates. It definitely goes to his credit and does not leave us guessing. In his "Paratrimshikha Vivarna" he explicitly pens down the name of his earliest ancestor as Atrigupta who was born in Antarvedi—the Doab between the Ganges and Jamuna.[6] Again in "Tantraloka" he refers to his sterling qualities of head and heart and being captivated by these was brought to Kashmir—"The crest of Himalayas" by king Lalitaditya.[7] The date of the reign of Lalitaditya is circa 725-761. He was also known as Mukhtapida and was eager for conquests.[8] He defeated the the king of Kanauj Yasosvarman.[9] and along with the booty brought Atrigupta also to Kashmir. Abhinava Gupta goes on to record "In that beautiful city (Srinagar) like that of Kubera's (Alka) in front of the temple of "Sheetanshumauli" (Siva having the moon as his crest) on the Vitasta, the king got built for him a spacious house and also granted a Jagir of land to him.[10] There is a veriable gap of century and a half between Atrigupta and Abhinava Gupta's grand father Varahagupta. In between the two, the author has left the family tree blank for reasons best known to him. Coming direct to the Tantraloka commentary, Abhinava Gupta Explicity says that his father was Narasinhagupta, popularly known as Chukulaka and his mother's name was Vimalakala.[11]

Herein we have to refer to the observation made by late Madhusudan Kaul to the Kashmir Research Department who in his introduction to "Ishvara" Pratyabhijna" has erroneously taken Laksmana Gutpa as his father[12] Swami Laksmana Ji also corroborates the other view that Narsimha Gupta was his father.[13] Moreso, the direct confession of Abhinava Gupta as regards his parents and their names leaves nothing to argue about.[14] Laksmana Gupta was definetely one of the preceptors of Abhinavagupta who initiated him into the pratyabhijna Shastra as acknowledge by him in his introduction to Ishvara Pratyabhijne Vivriti Vimrashini in the words.

"Shri Laksmana Gupta showed me the path to pratyabhijna theory (recognition)."

The silence of Kalhana about Abhinava Gupta as such is intriguing-he mentions three "Abhinavas" in his "Rajatarangini and the suffix" Gupta he has not appended with any of these. The first Abhinava[15] is a "Divira" or a scribe, the second foster-brother of Kayyamantaka in the reign of Samgramaraja[16] and the third a Damara[17] a landed aristrocrat, where the name of Abhinava Gupta appears a scholar of repute or a Saiva, whereas he has at times referred to such names as Muktakana, Shivasvamin Anandavarhana and Ratnakara etc.[18] It may be aruged that our author was more after learning than after the favour of kings, hence was not attached to any court. Consequently Kalhana, whose forte being the description of kings skips over him. However, the fame which Abhinava Gupta acquired during his life-time and even after could not have eluded the chronicler Kalhana. He could not ignore the poweful Kashmiri tradition. While mentioning Ananda Vardhana the name of Abhinava Gupta would have been a natural corollary being his commentator. Subsequent research in this behalf might throw some light on this omission. About his date or probable years in which he lived, he has bequeathed to us some keys which if properly used, can unlock this bane of Indian date-keeping most easily. In the last verse of "Brhati Vimarsini" he states that he finished this assignment in the 90th years when 4115 years of kaliyuga had elapsed; by deducting 25 years from the Kali era, the local or Saptarsi era can be found. It works at 4090th year of the Saptarsi calendar and the word "Navatitame" used by him in that verse corresponds to 90th year of 4000 Kali era. Even we at present write down only 74 actually it is 1974-seventy fourth year of 1900 Christian era.

Again in one of his Stotras which is called "Bhairavastava" in the last verse he gives the date and his name also.

"Abhinava Gupta composed this Stava (eulogy) on the 10th of dark fortnight in the month of Pausha in the year Vasu (8) Rasa (6)". In Sanskrit the digits are read from left, hence it comes to 68. It is definitely the 68th year of the Saptarsi Samvat 4000 as shown above. Moreover in his Kramastotra he again refers to date as:-

> *"In the 66th year, on the ninth day of dark fornight, I, Abhinavagupta, in the month of Maghar, praised Lord Siva."*

So it can safely be inferred that Abhinavagupta's literary period extended from 4066 to 4090 Laukika or Saptarsi era corresponding to 990-1015 A.D. Even though we have tried to locate the period but at the same time, we are not sure that Kramastotra is his first work. It is to be remembered in this, context, that Abhinavagupta having written a host of books, the chronological order of his works cannot be fixed easily. Those works which bear the dates can be arranged without any effort, but those which have no date or have not been referred to by the subsequent authors will defeat any such solution. In this way we can safely say that "Kramastotra" might not be his first composition, it might be pushed back to two decades at least as in the chronological order fixed by Dr. K.C. Pandey this Stotra, stands at No. 13. Hence we might safely assume that his literary career commenced from 970 A.D. According to his own testimony he adopted many Gurus for pursuing knowledge in different fields and even went outside Kashmir, presumably to Jalandhar to find a Guru "Shamboo Nath" there. The years of initiation after which maturity dawned on him might be taken not less than 30 years, after which confidence was gainied by him to write independently. Hence we might place his birth nearabout 940 A.D. He might have lived even beyond 1015 A.D. and the varacity of the tradition prevalent in Kashmir .to this day, that he entered a cave while reciting the "Bhairavastava" along with 1200 disciples and was never seen again cannot be doubted. This cave, alleged to have received the mortal frame of Abhinavagupta, is situated at Birwa village some five miles from Magam on the Gulmarg range.

So it is not surprising to find that "Jayaratha" alludes to his being[19] that his parents while uniting for his birth rose above all wordly desires and identified themselves with Shiva and Shakti. The offspring thus born called Yognibhu, is looked upon as a fit vehicle for propounding and propagating Shavistic Monism

Not only this abhinavagupta has been called a Bhairva incarnate by the commentator of "Parmartha-Sara" Yoga Raja while commenting on the last line of this treatise : He has explained this epithet at length. So the traditional belief amongst the Kashmiri Pandits that Abhinavagupta was a living Bhairava in human form is not without basis.

Now we come to the place of his mental activity. From his own authority we learn that Lalitaditya had got built a palatial house for Atrigupta when he carried him along from Antarvedi in Kashmir (quoted earlier). This house was built on the banks of Vitasta. However, in one of the Mss of Tantraloka belonging to Late Pt. Maheshwar Razdan there is a different reading as meaning "at the head of Vitasta" i.e. the source. However, in the quotation is used the pronoun agreeing with (SRINAGAR) hence this seems to be an interpolation.

In the first verse on the Vartika on "Malini Vijaya" it has been specifically laid down:

"The Kashmirian Abhinavagupta in the East of the city known as Pravara Pura (Srinagar) composed the Vartika on the very first verse of "Malinivijya".

From this it is clear that Srinagar was divided into several zones that i.e., East, west etc, and in the East Zone our author lived; but nothing can be said whether this was his ancestral home or an acquired house. However, there is a reference in the Tantraloka of his having shifted to another city at the request of one of his disciples Mandra.

"Mandra in order to save him (Abhinavagupta) from distraction requested him to shift to his beautiful city".

It is also clear from this that his earlier house must have been located in a very busy centre in the city, so was not suitable for his calm composure and undivided attention so necessary for the delineation of such a terse and delicate subject as philosophy.

On the authority of Kalana we know that Lalitaditya had built three more cities in the outskirts of Parvarapura-Srinagar. The one Parihaspura, and the other Lalitpura and the third Lokapunya.

However, the former was meant as a respite for the war-worn king and all the amenities of Parihasa (enjoyment) were provided there;[20] Hence it could not be a quiet city. The latter was taken kindly to by the king as it was built by his architect in his absence[21], hence it must have been comparatively deserted and all the same calmer; it might be surmised that Mandra lived there and invited his Guru to that very city for being quieter and far from the madding crowds, so that his "distraction could be averted" The Third city along with a cluster of villages was given in offering to Vishnu.[22]

Even though Abhinava Gupta lived during the span of 940-1015 A.D. but no city worth the name was founded by the king during this period. Although he saw the reigns of Yashaskara, Samgrama Deva, Ksema Gupta, Didda and Samgrama Raja, yet the cities founded by Lalitaditya still found favouour with the people. Even though one century and a half had elapsed, the twin cities of Parihasapura and Lalitpura had not fallen into oblivion. In the reign of Samgrama Raja (1003-1028) A.D.) the Brahmins of Parihasapura started a fast a bring down the fall of Tunga[23] his Prime Minister. This allusion to the city nearly two hundred years after it was founded testifies to its being very important at that time and might have been the royal capital even.

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1. Bharat Manjri
2. Kavya Praksha
3. Sir M. Willians Skt. English Dictionary.
4. Sankara Digvijaya XV, 158.
5. Catallogus Catalogum page 25.
6. 280. Ahnika-37
7. Raja Tarangini IV, 126, 131.
8. Ibid IV, 140.
9. Ibid.
10. Tantraloka-Ah, 37,
11. Tantraloka commentary 1, 14.
12. Vimarshini Vol. 11, page 7.

13. In his introduction to Srimad Bhagvadgita Commentary by Abhinavagupta page 2.
14. Tantraloka commentary, 1-14.
15. VI-130.
16. VII-93.
17. VII-59.
18. V-34.
19. Tantraloka commentary 1, 14-15.
20. Raja Tarangini, IV-194.
21. Ibid. IV, 186.
22. Ibid IV, 193.
23. Ibid VII, 13.

8
Somadeva

T.N. Raina

Sometimes back the Indo-Soviet Cultural academy observed Somadeva Day to pay tributes to a story teller of all times to come. Hardly did any newspaper or publicity media in Somadeva's native land, Kashmir take notice of this great event. Perhaps very few knew about the great scholar Somadeva's Kashmir origin. No doubt Radio Kashmir has serialized his Vital Pachise, but even our Cultural Academy seems to be not familiar with Somadeva and his *Katha Sarit Sagara*—"the Ocean of Rivers of Tales".

In 10th-century Kashmir, when the greatest of Kashmir's epoch's under King Avanti Varman was coming to an end because of the quarrel between his son Shankar Varman, foolishly fanned by his queen Suriamati, an internecine war was on. Somadeva was a courtier. Much is not known about his birth, parentage, or any other scholastic achievements, but Katha Sarit Sagara is too brilliant to need any satellites.

According to tradition, Suriamati was overwhelmed with grief and had lost her appetite and sleep. Somadeva was asked to console her, and the great epic, second only to Ramayana, and Mahabharata was born. Even since writers have never wearied of drawing from it. After Bible and other holy books, Katha Sarit Sagara is the only book which has been translated in every language of the world. Alif Laila (the Arabian Nights) is according to scholars a rendition of it.

According to a tradition Somadeva is said to have borrowed or was inspired by the cycle of King Udayana of ancient India written by Gunadhya in Paisachi language (the language of meat-eaters). The work itself is lost. In Indian, Antiquary, Dr. A. Grierson irrefutably settles Gunadhya's origin as Kashmir and the paisachi be used to write in as the earliest Kashmiri spoken by aborigins of the Valley. The word pishit in Sanskirt means meat and Paisachi the meat-eaters. There is much internal evidence in Gunadhya's Brihat-Katha to indicate his North-Western origin. The achievement of Ionians (Greeks)-figures in it.

Besides Somadeva, recessions of Brihat Katha have been made by Biddhasiamin and Kshemmendra. Both of these are mannered in style and very concise and difficult to read. Somadeva's style is easy, simple and elegant. It is by all estimates a masterpiece.

The Katha Sarit Sagar, begins with the anecdotes of King of Vatsas in Northern India.

He marries Vassavadatta and afterwards Padmavati, as we know from Bhasa's drama. The two marriages are described as an introduction to the story of Mararahanadatta, king's son. He is born with thirty-two auspicious marks of Chakravartin; this means that if he renounces the world he will become a Buddha, and if he adheres to the secular life he will be an emperor. After a life of adventure, in the course of which he loses his beloved and wins her back, he become King of the Vidyadharas, the semidivine inhabitants of the Himalayas.

The whole story is divided into a hundred and twenty-four "waves" (tarangas).

Somadeva is a born story-teller. He shapes the rough stones of popular literature into gems sparking with luster.

"Among the people whom he describes are the fool who, being hungry, has eaten seven cakes and wishes that he had started with the seventh ; another who having been told to guard the front door, puts it on his back and goes off to the theatre with it ; and the three fastidious persons of whom the first cannot eat rice because he perceives the taste of everything which its roots have drawn from the ground, the second complaints that his girl smells of the goat's milk on which she was led as a baby, and the third cannot sleep because there is hair under his seven mattresses.

Thieves were always severely punished in India. But their cunning is admired. It is the same with the worthless man who has risen to high office ; we laugh at tricks and jeer at his dupes. Kings and even goods ore outwitted by rogues and their difficulties are a source of fun.

The most amusing anecdotes deal with feminine frailty.

The miraculous elephant of a king has been hurt by a fall. A voice from heaven announces that it will rise again when it is touched by a chaste women. The ladies of the zenana and those of the city, to the number of eighty thousand, pass before the elephant, without producing any effect whatever. At last a poor servant ugly and dirty, performs the miracle.

Other stories are in honour of the tender, faithful wife. An old couple recall their past lives and see themselves always emitted-an Indian Philemon and Baucis. But as a rule the woman and the ascetic are objects of satire.

While Guendhya sometimes follows Buddhism, Somadeva is decidedly a Sivate and worshipper of Durga. He describes the bloody orgies performed in her honour. The half-savage Bhils conduct man-hunts in order to supply their goddess with regular victims, and magical rites are performed with blood and entrails. The cult of the "Mothers" and the activities of witches are painted in lively colours. We see women and girls praying in the temples of the phalous (linga). Siva floats above all, the author even makes him receive, worship from a Bodhisattva, Jimutavahana. Harsha does the same thing in his Nagananda. For the life of the middle classes the Katha-sarit-sagara is an invaluable source of information.

Within this collection is a smaller collection entitled the Vetala-Panchavimsatika, the "Twenty-five Tales of the Vampire" by unknown author of unknown date. The versification is simple, the foundation is Tantric, and the whole seems to be intended as an exercise in posing riddles.

Everyday a Yogi brought to King Vikramasena a fruit, which, according to the custom, the King handed to his treasurer. But one day the tame monkey bit the fruit, and out fell a priceless jewel. Honour obliged the King to return the Yogi an equal service. He therefore agreed to go by night to the burning ground, and at the bidding of the Yogi—it is a very striking scene—i.e. brought him the body of a hanged man, which he had to seek at a certain place and in a certain manner. According to Brahmanic ideas, to touch a corpse was the worst defilement, and burning-ground were the scene of demoniacal orgies. The King, true to his promise, took the corpse over his shoulder. Then the vampire which dwelt in the body said, "O King, the road is long. To beguile the way, hear this story" - and so the first story begins. It ends with a point of casuistry which the King must settle under pain of a curse. Hardly has he given his opinion, when the corpse is again hanging on its tree, the King must again detach it and place on his shoulder amid the fiendish laughter of the bhutas, and again then vampire says, "O King, the road is long," and so on.

Some of these tales are cruel and relentless in their painting of human perfidy, others are amusing and witty.

For example, the daughter of a Brahman was asked in marriage by three suitors. While her father was puzzled which to choose, she stepped on a black snake and fell dead. Witch-doctors came to revive her after many incantations, declared that, having been bitten by a black snake, she was indeed dead. Here funeral ceremonies (samskara) were performed, and of the three lovers one climbed on to the pyre by her side; another established himself as a Yogi on the place where her ashes were, and the third took to wandering as a mendicant monk (parivrajaka). He happened to go into the house of a Brahman, and was horrified to see the mother, angry with her child, which would not leave her in peace to do her cooking, throw it into the fire. He refused to take food in the house, but the Brahman calmed his scruples by taking a book and reading a mantra, or spell, where upon the child rose, rested as if he had slept. At night the young monk stole the book and ran to the burning-ground. He read the spell, and his beloved, rose, living, and with her the suitor who had been burned with her. The Yogi was there too, and there they were, all three, again claiming the lady. Who should have her?

The King answered: "The man who reanimated her is her father, because he gave her life. He who was reborn with her is thereby her brother. Only the man who did nothing at all, the Yogi, can be her husband.

A problem which the King cannot solve is that of the relationship between the children and grandchildren of a mother married by her son and of her daughter married by her father.

But the vampire, who is Siva himself, satisfied with the King's constancy, reveals to him the evil intentions of the Yogi, who wishes to kill the King with the aid of demons and, by doing magic with his body to obtain occult power. The King slays the Yogi and gets the magic power for himself, and the "Tales of Vampire" end.

Many stories in this work appear in other literatures, without it being possible to determine their origin or line of descent. Western motives are to be found in it. One such is the story of the Trojan Horse, which occurs three times in Indian literature, in plays or tales, with the local difference that the animal is an elephant.

Needless to say, the Katha-sarit-sagara was likewise much imitated. The manner in which the stories in it are boxed one in another is simpler, but less natural than in the Panchatantra, in which they are introduced according to the sense and serve to prove an argument.

The "Seventy Tales of the Parrot" Suka-saptati, is a work of the same type, but not of the same value, as the Katha-sarit-sagar.

Preserved in the Research Akademy library, now housed in Kashmir university campus if birch bark MSS of Katha sarit sagara of circa 16th century A.D. Another birch bark MSS of Sultan Zain-ul-Abideen's time was acquired from a house in Srinagar by the late Dr. Raghuvira.

Every Indian and perhaps the most, every Kashmiri should be proud of one of the greatest sons of Kashmir, Somadeva.

9

Jonraj

Prof. M.L. Kaul

Besides being a man of great learning and scholarship, Jonraj was an erudite commentator, devout Shaivite versed in the credo of Kashmir Shaivism and above all a historiographer of great potential. He was a luminary in the court of Kashmir King Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70 A.D.) popularly known as Budhsah who having fought the forces of parochialism and religious bigotry gave a Secular orientation to political process in Kashmir, and also paved way for a new concept of composite culture. Jonraj, a son of the soil, mustered all the resources of his intellectual and poetic genius to revitalize the Kashmir tradition of writing history as it had suffered a hiatus with the decline of the Hindu hegemony in Kashmir. Glaring a fact as it is, after Kalhan, the Haredotus of Kashmir history, for a long spell of more three hundred years, Kashmir did not have a historian, who could continue the tradition in the manner and style peculiar to Kashmir as had found its apogee in the Rajtarangini, the magnum opus of Kashmir history. Equipped with the honed up skills of a historiographer, he only was commissioned to continue the Rajtarangini from where Kalhan had left it with a view to fill up the yawning chasm in the Kashmir history caused by the sweeping changes in the fields of politics and religions. Jonraj has described the political and religious changes in Kashmir in his characteristic style which has been misconstrued as coloured by religion.[1] His essential contribution to the domain of Kashmir history lies in focussing on that period of history when the Hindu hegemony was on decline and the Muslim rule gaining ascendency.

Not unlike other Sanskrit poets and literatures, Jonraj, though a historian, has failed to provide ample notice which could establish his antecedents. Though largely reticent in his Rajtarangini he has doled out some definite autobiographical information in his commentaries on Prithviraj and Srikanthcari,[2] Burdened with a deep sense of gratitude his illustrious pupil, Srivar, the author of Zain-Rajtarangini has littered his works with vital pieces of information regarding his guru (teacher) whom he held in high esteem. On the basis of information gleaned from all the source material it can be established that his father's name was Nonraj and his grandfather was Lollraj. Jyotisankar was another name he went by. A Brahmin by caste, he was adorned with title of Rajanak.[3] A high-up in the social hierarchy, he was intimately connected with the court presided over by his munificent patron, whom he eulogizes for having done him personal good by way of restoring unto him a piece of land otherwise usurped by his distant relatives. As testified by his Rajtarangini, his links with the court have in no way deterred him from highlighting vital facts of history in bold contours and be it said to the credit of Jonraj that he has not missed the woeful plight of the vanquished and the losers though history, to him, was a saga of Kings, conquerors, the men of high degree in the corridors of power.

Without being conjectural on the issue, the date of Jonraj has been determined by tapping the evidence provided by him through his works and also him pupil, Srivar. His commentary on the Srikanthcarit of Mankha, a contemporary of Kalhan, is the firm evidential plank that established that Jonraj lived later than Mankha, almost a definite fact of history. Without mincing words Srivar informs that Jonraj died in the Saptrisi Samvat (45/35) which corresponds to 1459 A.D.[5] It is a well known fact that his Rajtarangini comes to an abrupt end. So it is not unfair to put that Jonraj fairly ripe in years must have met a sudden death. On the basis of all these sources scholars have justifiably worked out his date of birth to be 1389 A.D. Jonraj in his Rajtarangini makes a categoric mention of Srinagar, the Sharika Shail.[6] If it is taken as a clue, be it said that he was a resident of Srinagar Being a courtier in the court of Bud-Shah, he must have inhabited an area or locality nearer the precincts of the Royal Palace, actually situated at Nowshahr, as he could not afford to be away from the royal gaze.

His commentaries on Prithivirajvijay by Jyanak, Srinkanthcarit by Mankh, the Kiratarjuney by Bharvi, all the three being famous epics, at least two of them woven round, Shiva themes, reveal his expositional faculties, deftness of language and analysis and above all level of expressive style. From the references available from his text of Rajtarangini, it can be inferred that he was deeply read in Ramayana, Mahabharata, Nilmat-Puran, and Kalhan's Rajtarangini. Ayurved and Astrology where his special fields of study. His mystical proclivities get established by his in-depth study of Yoga-Vashishth, highly mystical passages of which he had Srivar both read out to their patron, who also in turn had developed a mystical vein which under the stress effect of frustration burst forth in his all too famous Shikayat.

With the objective of perpetuating the Kalhanian tradition of writing history, Jonraj under a borrowed title wrote his Rajtarnagini and his incidental use of Rajavali does not negate the evidence of Srivar, who names his work as Rajtarangini. Jonraj is honest in admitting that he wrote his document of history at the behest of Shiryabhatt,[7] who was responsible for introducing him to the court favours. His history is a continuous narration of the events pertaining to the reigns of the Kings and Sultans and is a departure from the Kalhanian model. Jonraj has described the rule of Hindu kings in a hasty and sketchy manner and in truth is not on the terra firma of historical facts and reliable data. His all but brief mention of first five rulers (Jayasimha, Parmanuk, Vantidev, Boppdev and Jassak) is lacking in historical pith.[8] From Sukhdev onwards, starts doling out more information of historical import. His narrative regarding Muslim ascendancy in Kashmir is authentic, factual and reliable. Muslim rulers whose narrative Jonraj has documented are Shah Mir, Jamshed Ala-ud-din, Shahab-ud-din, Qutub-ud-din, Sikander, Ali Shah and Zain-ul-Abdin.[9] The fact of his being a direct witness to the rule of Muslim kings in Kashmir lends credence to whatever information he has put in his document of history.

Jonraj has a deep sense of reading contradictions in developing historical and political situations. He is categoric in conveying the impression that the Hindu Rule in its last phase was declining.[10] It was a period of decay when disorder, confusion and internecine strife were rife. No ruler worth the name was in a position to defend the country against the internal and external forces of disruption.[11] Damaras with their militancy were a force to be reckoned with and also the Brahmins were sore over the taxes the were decreed to pay.[12] This political situation could not be met by a weak ruler, who dragged his feet in face of internal and outside aggression. At this very juncture of chaos and confusion Dulchu,[13] a Mangol, carried fire and sword to Kashmir and made the debilitated regime fall to its hands. With his orgy of loot and arson, he led to the disappearance of political authority in the land. Waiting for a chance, Renchen,[14] a fugitive from Ladhakh, availed himself of the disorderly conditions and got Ramchander (the same person who had given him shelter) killed at Lohara thereby establishing his rule in Kashmir. With initiated into Shaivite creed but after being refused initiation by Shivswami,[15] Persian chroniclers put that he accepted Islam at the behest of Bulbul-Shah,[16] a Sufi from Turkistan. Jonraj has drawn graphic pictures of destruction and terror caused by Dulchu and Renchin throughout the length and breadth of Kashmir.

Jonraj is silent about the religion adopted by Renchin but affirms that he married the redoubtable Kota Devi (usually called Kota Rani).[17] Persian chroniclers by and large acclaim him as the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir and credit him with the construction of the first mosque in Srinagar, not now traceable. A great strategist Shah Mir, who also had taken shelter in Kashmir, although his presence over here had manoeuvred key positions for his sons in the administration of Kashmir and in his ultimate battle with Kota Devi captured Srinagar when she had moved to Jayapidpur on some business, imprisoned her in the fort and through pressure and allurements made her to cave in[18] Jonraj puts all the stories of suicide by Kota Devi to rest when he categorically informs that Shah Mir "Slept with her on the same bed for the night and next morning handed her over to executioners".[19] He describes Shahab-ud-din (1355-72 A.D.) on the same pattern as Kalhan had described Lallitaditya (724-61 A.D.), perhaps Shabab-ud-din, to him, is an ideal king. Skinder (Jonraj's Skender) (1398-1413 A.D.) known to historians as iconoclast, came to the throne at an unripe age and as per the Persian chroniclers especially Baharistan-i-shah[20] under the influence of Mir Sayyid Mohammed Hamdani made determined efforts to change the religious profile of Kashmir and took to the breaking of idols and demolishing of temples in the same manner as fish take to water. Also under the instigation of Suhabhatt,[21] Sikander while ignoring State affairs, according to Jonraj, took to the task of demolishing Hindu shrines and temples in every village, hamlet, town and city.[22]. Jonraj is categoric in putting that he destroyed the temple of Martand, Vijyayesh, Ishan, Chakrabrat, Tripureshwar, Varaha and Sureshwari.[23] In the times of Alishak, Suha Bhatt, the Prime Minister, proved a scourge for the Brahmins,[24] imposed jaziya on them and stopped their exist from Kashmir.[25] To Jonraj, Sikander's absolute allegiance to Mir Sayad Mohammed Hamdani was an act of political sagacity,[26] but to the Muslim chroniclers he was in word and deed a disciple of the Muslim divine. In the words of Prof. Mujib,[27] Sikander is the sole king who took to forcible conversion in Kashmir and made it a state policy. Jonraj has woven an eulogy for Zain-ul-Abdin whom he sees as the 'incarnation' of Narayan. He has depicted his tremendous building activities in Kashmir along with his role-profile in rehabilitating the Hindus, who under the persecutionary measures of narrow-minded kings had fled their native land.

Obviously during the Muslim Rule deep-rooted political, religious and cultural changes occurred in Kashmir. Jonraj clearly puts that Muslims destroyed the old usage in Kashmir as tempests uproot the trees and locusts devour up the crops. He has avoided, perhaps deliberately, to make a mention of Mir Sayad Ali Hamdani, who had poured into Kashmir alongwith 700 Sayyids in the reign of Shahab-uddin and was largely responsible for changing the religious scenario in the land of Kashmir. During the course of his narrative, he makes a reference to a 'Yogini',[29] who perhaps is Lalla, the mystical lark of Kashmir. Mention is also made of Mulla Noor-ud-din,[30] the greatest guru of Muslims, who was imprisoned by Suhbhatt in the reign of Alishah, perhaps on the charge that he took sides with the Brahmins when they were subjected to atrocities and persecution.

Jonraj in his essentials is fatalist and fate, to him, is a potent factor that shapes history and brings about changes in history. He ascribes all the changes in the history of Kashmir to acts of fate. While explaining good and evil acts of individual Kings, his usual rationale is to attribute them to the good deeds and sins of people. Even Kali age, according to him, is a cause that brings about changes in the course of history and Jonraj, to be sure, harbours a medieval outlook on history and has not been able to give an objective treatment to the issues of history as was wont with the Grecians, essentially objectivists in their world view.

Though aware of the Kalhanisan model, Jonraj fails to dilate on the sources of his history, obliging his critics to ascribe it to his ignorance of 'historical method'. His handling and treatment of the Hindu period is nearly skeletal owning to the paucity of source materials. The manner in which he has depicted the Muslim rule is by no means comprehensive though he was a witness to the rule of Sikander, Alishah and Budshah. To be fair to Jonraj, be it said that sources of history in his times were completely decimated and destroyed. He, therefore, was compelled to depend an oral tradition, genealogies of kings and such other unhistorical sources and clear as it is could not transcend the limitations imposed upon him by history itself.

In the powerful narrative, Jonraj makes a mention of some places of historical and cultural importance. These places though under different names are still traceable. He is exact and reliable in giving the topography of all such places the mention of which is incidental. Vamparashav (Khovurpur), Utpalpur (Kakpore), Vijayayeshpur (Vyajibror), Chakradhar (Chakdar), Awantipur (Vuntpore), Devasaras (Divasar), Kramrajya (Kamraz), Suyyapur (Sopore), Shayamala (Hamal), Srinagar, Tarabla and Banbal are some such places as have found mention and categorical reference in his Rajtarangini. Lakes like Sureshwari Sar, Achodsar, Mansbal and Mahapadmasar have also been alluded to. Dense forests, springs, running streams and other charms of Kashmir scenario have also not been out of his focus.

Chronology is the forte is Jonraj's Rajatarangini. Invested with an ample fund of date sense, his credentials as historian, have remained unrivalled so far. While describing the Hindu rulers and the Sultans he is definite is giving their respective dates which lend logical sequence to the events in history. By exactly mentioning laukik or Saptrisi Samvat of each King or Sultan, Jonraj lends enough amplitude to each of the personage whose role-profile he aspire to dilate on. The precision of his dates could be critically cross checked had the history of Mullah Ahmed or Mullah Nadri been available as both the documents are lost in the womb of time. The chronology of Persian chronicles is not reliable as they have by and large borrowed dates from Jonraj or have committed inaccuracies in converting his dates to Hijra. The credibility of his is established by the inscription from Tapar and Kuther that have mentioned Parmanuk and Shabab-ud-din respectively whose dates exactly fall within the reign of these two Kings as stated by Jonraj.

Jonraj has not concealed facts of history and no limitations imposed on him by the court have deterred him from highlighting the role of Hindu rulers and Muslim Sultans, who were tyrannical to people and tried to chop off the twig of mercy from the tree of justice. Jonraj needs re-appraisal so that the dark corners of Kashmir history are put in proper perspective.

REFERENCES

1. Issak Khan-Perspective on Kashmir Page 100.
2. Kathan Kautuk Edited by Schmitz.
3. Rajanak means one who is honourable and erudite its equivalent is Razdan.
4. Jonraj-Rajtarangini.
5. Srivar-Zain-Raj. 16.
6. Srikanth Koul, Jonraj, p. 33.
7. It is Hariparabat over the top of which Akbar built a Fort which is still standing.
8. Jonraj, Raj St. 69.
9. Jonraj, Raj St. 5, 26.
10. Jonraj, Raj St. 12.
11. Srivar Zain Raj, 1, 6.
12. Jonraj, Raj. St. 11.
13. Dulchu the same as Zulzu, or Zul Dadar Khan a Mongal, invader on Kashmir. Dulchu derived from Du-lu-he-chi—S.K. Kaul.
14. Rinchen, a runway from Ladakh, the same as Rattan Joo, Rattan Shah, Ranjpoi, claimed to be the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir. Intially a Bon, Dr. Singh and Dr. Rafiquee do not contribute to his conversion to Islam.
15. Jonraj, Raj, St, 193.
16. A Sufi from Turkistan. His original name was Syed Abdul Rahman also known as Sharaf-ud-Din, came to Kashmir twice, died in 1327 AD in the same of Udyandev. Belonged to Suhrawardy Order of

Suffis, Persion Chroniclers claim him to be responsible for Renchen's Conversion to Islam.

17. Jonraj, Raj, St, 156, 157, 160, 161, 162.
18. Jonraj, Raj, St, 304.
19. Jonraj, Raj, St, 305.
20. Baharistan-i-Shahi, Manuscript 156, Tarakul Sayed Ali 18, Fatuhetr Kulımiya, men 156A.
21. Jonraj, Raj, St, 596, a Hindu convert to Islam, married his daughter to Mir Syed Mohd. Hamadani.
22. Jonraj, Raj, St, 597.
23. Jonraj, Raj, St. 601, 602.
24. Jonraj, Raj, St. 606.
25. Jonraj, Raj, St, 626.
26. Jonraj, Raj St, 574.
27. Jonraj, Raj, Stm. Prof. Majeeb, Indian Muslim, p. 379.
28. Jonraj, Raj, St. 575.
29. Jonraj, Raj, St, 348, Lalla in waqati Kashmir, Zani Arifa in Baharistani-Shahi.
30. Jonraj, Raj, St, 673.
31. Srikanth Kourl, Jonraj p. 101.
32. Jonraj, Raj, St, 574, 597, 641.
33. Jonraj, Raj, St, 355, 594, 680, 572, 727.
34. Jonraj, Raj, St, 594, 623.
35. Baharistan-i-Shai, Manuscript-46-47 Srivar, Zain-Rajtarangni, 5, 75.

10

"Ksemendra"

(His Poetry and Style)

Prof. K.N. Dhar

Without mincing words, it would be expedient to judge him as a poet first and the subject he chose as a vehicle for his poetic talent will merit discussion after it. The most accepted definition of poetry from Eastern point of view is by Kavi Raja Vishwa Natha when he says that even a single sentence containing Rasa Aesthetic pleasure may be called poetry.[1] Further to pinpoint the importance of Rasa he defines it as रस्यते इति रस:, which tinkles or which is relished is called Rasa.[2] With some other constituents such as अलंकार (figures of speechs) गुण (poetic qualities) etc. Rasa is acknowledged by one and all as the soul of poetry. Herein, obviously, the emphasis is on the content of the poetry.

Ksemendra himself defines poetry as containing 'Auchitya' Propriety). According to him Propriety has been defined as :

> *"An embellishment (figure of speech) is a real embellishment when applied at the proper place. Gunas (quality) are actually merits when they uphold the norms of Propriety."[3] So, it is clear that Ksemendra does not subscribe to Rasa theory of poetry and makes bold to give his own definition. He actually makes the poetry purposeful. Furthermore in a poetic composition when*

> *different Rasas (sentiments) are intermixed, Propriety, alone can preserve their flavour; if this kind of discretion is not employed, then the composition would only be a* रससंकर *counterfeit mixture of sentiments.*[4]

The author lays emphasis on the existence of propriety in such word, sentence, qualities (गुण, अलंकार) figures of speech, verbs, syntax, gender, number, adjective, tense and even on other limbs of poetry (Kavyangas) i.e. environment, time, intuition, thought and nomenclature.[5]

Therefore, the difference between the Rasa school and the definition of poetry given by Ksemendra is that the former is subjective in essence and the latter is objective is comprehension. The Advocates of Rasa did definitely confuse propriety with qualities गुण and impropriety and blemishes दोष[6]

But Ksemendra like a true revolutionary does mark the frontiers between the two because his judgement is objective. Before testing his merit as a poet by his own standards or by the Eastern norms of criticism, it will be feasible to define poetry and also the making of a poet from western point of view also.

Wordsworth defines poetry "nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that is which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth."[7] Herein this celebrated poet under-lines the truth which should deserve to be the subject of poetry. Another famous poet, Shelley, while defining poetry in a general way, takes it to be the expression of imagination.[8] Coleridge makes it as antithesis of science having for its immediate object pleasure not truth.[9] Herein the emphasis is laid on the pleasure which should flow from a poetic composition. Thomas Carlyle declares poetry to be "musical thought"[10]. This definition is perhaps in consonance with that given by Dr. Johnson when he says that "poetry is a metrical composition."[11] Both these definitions pertain to the form of poetry other than prose. Edgar Allan Poe also echoes the same feeling when according to him poetry is 'the rhythmic creation of beauty".[12] W.H. Hudson sees poetry "as an interpretation of life through imagination and feelings"[13]

However, from the perusal of all these definitions it is clear that poetry as such is a metrical composition pulsating with imagination and feeling and its goal is to interpret the truth or to provide pleasure.

In the way the form of poetry musical and metrical and its content either the truth or the pleasure have been properly and proportionately located. By comparing this definition with that of the Indian criticise it is patent that they are in line with the protagonists of Rasa theory which definitely tickles the emotions.

With regard to Ksemendra we have to note the didatic import in his poetry which he proclaims from the house tops. Therefore, the question arises whether a poet can be a moral teacher also. He has to translate his feelings and emotions faithfully as they ooze forth in his heart and preach morality through this medium is justified or not. To this knotty problem Sir Phillip Sidney provides a cogent answer. In his defence of poetic when he says that a poet is a "maker", the Indian counterpart being "Srishta" has the same meaning. So, it can be safely inferred that the poet does not express what already, exists, but he invents-precisely the "ideal" for the imitation of the reader in general. He (Sidney) further contends that the world created by the poet is surely better than what it exists really. In the same way fiction sounds truer than the fact. The contention of Sir Sidney to put squarely is that poet is actually a moral teacher, but Ksemendra while admitting this in toto, does not believe in his painting the ideal and thereby reform the "real". He would like to proceed from the "real" like a revolutionary and would like the reader to assess for himself "what should have been" from "what it is". Whatever he preaches on Morality is simply suggestive and not director. Perhaps, his approach is more realistic than Sir Sydney who would like us to go to the "real" via "ideal". While Ksemendra believes in treating the Real with its imperfections and all the time beckoning us in undertones and not directly to have an eye on the "perfect ideal". "What should not be" can be very efficiently emphasized by "what is".

His conviction about the function of propriety is poetry comes to him succour in this dilemma. "Propriety", according, to him is nothing but a real representation of life as it obtains. Had he painted it otherwise it would have amounted to impropriety. Hence his candid portrayal of society is an illustration of Propriety in its all of shades meaning. He would not like to pass on a counterfeit society for a genuine one. He believe in calling spade a spade and not confusing dress with gold.

While discussing the attributes of a poet, Ksemendra in his

"Kavi Kanthabhrana" has unambiguously laid down that a poet-in-the making should not seek the guidance of a logician or a grammarian because they hinder into flowering of a good poetry.[14] He is alive to the fact that good poetry should in no case get fettered in grammatical technicalities or the mental drill of logicians. It should flow like an uninterrupted stream. More-over, he even goes to the extent of saying that a poet in the making should neither go a begging not stoop to vulgarity in his narrations.[15] His imaginative faculty should not be wanting in anything and should not fail below the established norms of good taste. So, it is clear that Ksemendra as a teacher on poetry and also as poet does strike a happy mean between the precept and the practice, for this he has chosen the vehicle of Satire.

Satire has been defined as a piece of writing which ridicules the follies and wickedness of mankind of a class of people or of an individual. As has been made clear in the preceding pages his emphasis is on the individual different units of society, who are a veritable cancer for its healthy growth. Hence, his chastisement pulsating with sarcasm and irony does not border on vulgarity. It is a faithful representation of life. It can safely be asserted that this poetry is not a revolt against life in any sense of the word. The moral standards as should have been existent in the society—which actually are not there—form the dirge of his poetical compositions. Like Mathew Arnold he believes that "poetry" is at bottom criticism of life". Morality and ethical values do form an inextricable part of the texture of society, hence the poetry of revolt would be revolt against life itself. So, he does not revolt against it but lays it bare with pungent sarcasm and seemingly "mirthful laughter" only to relieve its grim effect on his readers.

In the same way, Ksemendra's poetry cannot be accused of being the poetry of Paradox. In a paradox the self-contradictory or absurd element is somewhat more pronounced that the truth "it contains. Our poet does not believe in the "Paradoxical" approach to poetry but instead prefers the direct approach which is easier to comprehend. He does not want us to solve riddles or puzzles.

Hence it is clear that his "Satire" does not subscribe either to revolt 'or to' Paradox, but transfer his innate feelings to the readers without any pretensions whatsoever.

- It has been contended that Satire is best suited to prose.[16] In it the appeal is made to reason, judgement it cannot be heightened by being garnished with an appeal to emotion."[17] However, our poet has employed the more difficult medium of poetry, hence his task to produce the desired effect is more arduous than those of the writers in this field. Perhaps for this reason some critics have called his poetry as versified prose.[18]

As has been shown earlier, this is sheer injustice to our poet. Like a true satirist he has to subjugate his emotion to the compelling reality around him.

The wings of his imagination do get clipped consequently his poetry may not touch the high water-mark of Kalidasa who has no such shortcomings and his emotions are free to take any direction whatsoever. Even then Ksemendra has yoked his poetic prowess admirably well to the exposition of the real by contrasting it with the ideal. For a satirist the method of contrast is indispensable. He may feel piqued at times with the gulf between the real and dreams, yet his anger has to be screened under a mark of "mirthful-laughter", as Ksemendra would say himself. The satirist has done to the mantle of a moralist even though he may not like it. His insistent beckoning to the ideal—appealing to the sense of right and wrong unconsciously bestows on him the status of a moral teacher. He cannot escape from it. Hence in his poetry the aesthetic content is naturally subservient to the moral one. Even having such discomfitures for the full flight of his imagination, Ksemendra has tried his hardest to introduce aesthetic pleasure into it, according to his own norms of "propriety" औचित्य as discussed earlier. His satire does shows the poet in him. His compositions are even now relished with the gusto of a lyric, vibrating with emotions and have never been treated as "codes on morality". Perhaps this popular reaction to his satire is a sufficient compliment to his genius as a poet of no mean order.

The very first verse of Samaya Matrska introduces him as a poet by his own right.

अनंगवातला स्त्रैण जिता येन जगत्त्रयी।
विचित्र शक्तये तस्मै नमः कुसुनधन्वने।।

"He who has conquered the three words by his exciting and stormy yet formless weapons, I salute him, the flower bowed cupid, for his enchanting power."

Whenever his imaginative faculty is not under the curbing thumb of the content or is free to take stride at this own will, be definitely touches the high water mark of poetic fancy. The poet in him remains subdued, not that he lacks proper imagination, but by the compelling nature of the subject he has chosen, and the vehicle of Shloka metre which cannot admit of any elaborated treatment, because of its comparative shorter span. His vocabulary is so rich that he looks like a living dictionary, hence he could readily and easily weave a particular situation or feeling out of the inexhaustible fund of words at his command. Words flow from his pen spontaneously and at times he does not feel diffident to use the local Kashmiri word also, perhaps to give his compositions a native colouring and flavour:-[19] तुम्बक वीणा स्कन्ध :

> *"The flute player has the veena and the tumbak on his shoulders.[20] To make its Kashmiri usage more emphatic he also used the word* नाँर *Nare[21] with it. In this context many such Kashmiri words even the idioms can be gleaned from his works e.g.* ताल[22] *in the sense of Sanskrit palate* घर्घा[23] *representing the roaring sound of clouds in Kashmiri. Not only this but even the Kashmiri colloquial taunts and abuses have also been reproduced by him faithfully in Sanskrit.*

To crown all, his similes and other figures of speech are not only apt but also homely. He does not believe in ethereal poetic fancy but has amply drawn from daily life. His personal experience and observation make his diction all the more realistic. His delineation of nature:

अथ सितकिरणरतिश्रमखिन्नेव विनिद्रतारका रजनी।
प्राभातिकसलिललवस्वेदवती क्षामतां प्रययौ।।

> *"The starry night keeping vigil having become disgusted with the fatigue caused by its sporting with the white rays (of the moon) gradually gets emaciated, being annointed with the morning dew as if with perspiration."[24]*

Describing Moonlight the poet portrays a bewitching scene with its enthralling effect with the help of very simple words.

मन्मथसितात पत्रं दिग्वनितास्फटिकदर्षणो विमल: ।
विरराज़ रजनिरमणी सितलितको यामिनीनाथ: ।।

"The lord of the night (the moon) a white Parasol of cupid, the unblurred mirror made of crystal for the lady of "space", the white Tilaka of the damsel of Night shone resplendently.[25]

While describing the beauty of the city (presumably Srinagar) he has to say :-

नवविसकिसलयकवलनकषायकलहंसकलरवो यत्र ।
कमलवनेषु प्रसरति लक्ष्म्या इव नूपुराराव: ।।

"*(In that city) where the musical notes of the pretty swans is all the more made sweeter by their devouring fresh lotus—stalks, which (musical notes) getting diffused in the lotus—groves sound like the jingling of the anklets of Goddess Lakshmi*".

About the content of Ksemendra's writings we have made it amply clear that he chose the ordinary man or woman with his or her all—weaknesses as his subject. The choice of such subject was in itself revolutionary at that time when fixed norms were laid in this behalf by the Rhetoricians. Ksemendra not only rebelled against such hackneyed standards such provided his own thesis for Rhetories and Literary. Criticism in his Auchitavicharacharcha and Kavikanthadbharna. He showed the path to the progressive trends in literature in those hoary days when dogmatic approach was the order of the day. After some ten centuries the humanity woke to the necessary of ushering in Progressive outlook in literature, more especially after the Russian Revolution of 1919. In a way Ksemendra combined in himself the unusual characteristics of a Prophet and a poet. He brought down the poetry from the ethereal heights to the matter of fact and real dimensions.

The style which he employed deserves some mention before we conclude this paper. Style is defined as mode of expression and we shall have to examine as to how Ksemendra acquits himself in this field. We know already that he uses very simple words, avoids compounds and ambiguous epithets. His appeal is direct. He does not believe in traversing zig-zig when shorter routes are available :

with the use of simple straight and chiselled words he produces the maximum effect; this is his immortal contribution to Sanskrit literature. He lives to the maxim propounded by Coleridge 'best words in best order" by every standards whatsoever. Moreover, the mode of expression he employees has his own indelible imprint on it. Regarding this trait in style J. Middleton Murray has observed "A style must be individual because it is the expression of an individual" Some sixty years after Ksemendra, one Kashmiri Soma Deva Bhatta also tried his pen on epitomizing Brahatkatha, but it can easily be understood from the comparison of the two, that Ksemendra has his own style which could not be immitated by Soma Deva. His own compatriot Rhetorician Vamana a protagonist of Riti School has said.

विशिष्टा पदरचना रीतिः, रीतिरात्मा काव्यस्य।

> *"Riti is a special arrangement of words; Riti is the soul of literature."*

Ksemendra's writings do possess the "special arrangement of words" he does not waste a single word, but known full well "that these are two - edged tools, if not used well, these can bite" as very aptly said by Anthony Trollope. Ksemendra's mastery over the language is perfect. He very prudentially uses an articular word to project a certain context and meaning. His selection of words is superb. T.S. Elliot has said "the poet has not a "personality" to express but a particular medium" which obviously connotes style. Ksemendra's style is neither artificial nor wanting in anything. It is to quote words with "Man speaking to man" and to make this definition more representative Ksemendra added the words "about the man" to it.

These words represents Ksemendra in all his shades. In his prolific writings he performs the mental surgery of Kashmiris, locates the disease and points towards its eradication. He with childlike innocence and simplicity employees the most direct language only to talk to man a man, because his aim is to beckon to him:

वनभुविमृगबन्ध हन्त पश्यन्ति नित्यं।
तदपि हरिणशावाः कूटपाशं विशन्ति।।

"Alas, seeing always the deer in the trap in jungle, even then the deerlings get into the crooked snares"

Notes :

1. Sabitya Darpava.
2. Ibid. (Excerpts from a Research paper by the author).
3. Avehita vichar charcha—6.
4. Ibid—17-18.
5. Ibid.
6. Like Mammatta, Vishwanatha (Kavya Prakash) Sahitya Darpana).
7. Essays in Criticism Second Series.
8. Defence of Poetry.
9. Biographia Literaria Chapter XIV.
10. Heroes and Hero Worship Lecture III.
11. Dictionary,
12. The poetic principle.
13. An introduction to Study of Literature.
14. 15th Verse I.
15. Ibid, II, 18.
16. The problem of style J. M. Murrey.
17. Ibid—page 60.
18. Dr. Surya Kanta, Ksemendra studies, Dr. Buhler Kashmir Report.
19. Deshopadesha, viii, 30.
20. Ibid
21. A home made mini-drum with a long tunnel like appendage made of clay, called Tumbaknar.
22. Ibid—viii 32.

23 Deshopdesha viii, 7.

24. Ibid—viii, 30
25. Samayamatrika viii, 1.

11

Bilhana

B.N. Pandit

Khonamooh is a tiny village near Pampore and is situated at the foot of the barren hill, surrounding the beautiful Dal Lake, on its other side. We can see orchards of almonds, small wells and dwellings of peasants scattered here and there in the village. Very few of the grape vines praised in the 'Vikramankadeva charitam' can now be found in the village.[1] Their place has now been taken by almonds. The second and the third things of praise about this ancient village were the saffron and some dwellings of scholars and saints of high merit.[2] Both these things have now disappeared from this ancient site of great poets and scholars.[3] But, even then, the very name Khonamooh revives the memory of the great poet Bilhana, a nightingale of Sanskrit Literature, who was born and educated in this village, some times in the eleventh century of the Christian era.

Kashmir was governed by the wicked king Kalasadeva, who was a tyrant and who committed so many atrocities on people. Among all the Hindu rulers of Kashmir, he was next only to Mihira Kula in tyranny. He would least care to honour any artist, poet, scholar or saint. How could Bilhana, a youthful and ambitious scholar and poet, keep contented a place ruled by such a tyrant ? He wanted appreciation, honour, fame and name and therefore, left Kashmir and travelled from place to place in the Northern Indian earning name and fame, getting wealth and giving it away in alms to worthy people and defeating scholars and writers in competition at all places.[4] Then he stayed for some time at the court of Anhilvada. The tradition says that it is this place, where he composed a very beautiful love lyric under the title "Caura Pancasika."

The episode about the lyric is more skin to European traditions than to Indian—A princess is in love with someone who is caught red-handed in her palace and is sentenced to death. He is taken to the gallows and there the executioners ask him to remember his favourite God before being killed. The secret lover starts to remember his beloved, the princes in different postures, emotions and conditions and in this way recollects so many past scenes of his romantic, happy and fruitful love in beautiful verses, because she alone can, in his opinion, be his favourite goddess. People collected round about became very much interested in the poetry of the secret lover, recited by him, at the verge of his death and were moved and impressed by his deep and strong emotion of love for the princess. They forget for the time being, the sin and the offence committed by the lover and taken away by the waves of the fast and the vigorous flow of the streams of love, emitting out of the heart and the speech of the sentenced lover. They start to curse the king and the law of the land, which were becoming the course of the untimely death of such a youthful handsome and glorious lover.

The princess, on the other hand, ascends the upper-most roof of her palace and takes her stand on a point from where she can see her lover about to be killed. She has a long silken rope with her and is prepared to hang herself as soon as her lover is killed, so that she can meet him in the other world without any delay. Let the other world be a heaven or a hell. She does not a care a bit about that but it interested only in her reunion with her lover as soon as it is possible. The news is carried to her mother—the senior queen. She carries it to the king who summons his senior ministers. The matter is quickly and it is resolved to get back the secret lover and to perform the ceremony of a regular marriage between him and the princess. A messenger is sent at once to the execution ground who reaches there just when the sentenced lover had recited the fiftieth verse and had asked the executioners to kill him immediately, because he could no longer bear the pangs of separation from him beloved, the princess. He is, at once, carried back to the palace and the princess is regularly married to him with due pomp and show.[5]

We find in Sanskrit anthologies some verses attributed jointly to Bilhana and some princess. Those verses suggest a strong and irresistible love between the two. For instance the princess says in the first half of a couplet—

"This is the compound of the fearful lion, who plays with the blood of the gangs of rutting mad elephants !"[6]

Bilhana replying to it, in the second, half says—

"Does, even then, a youthful elephant ever leave the *sallaki* plant (a plant so much liked by elephants) with the shining and playful tiny leaves?"[7]

Bilhana says in the first half of another verse: "The birth of Nalini (a lotus plant) has been useless, because she never saw the sphere of Moon with its cool and delighting rays."

The princess says in reply[8] :

"The birth of the Moon god also has been absolutely in vain because he has never seen the Nalini (a lotus plants) in full bloom (because it is in full bloom at daytime & not at night)."[9]

Such verses attributed jointly to Bilhana and some princess have given rise to a tradition that Bilhana was appointed to the princess, who used to learn from him, but was kept under a veil. The second verse cited above suggests this part of the tradition. 'The princess under the veil', is the lotus plant without a bloom and the poet Bilhana placed behind a curtain and, consequently, not seen by the princess is the Moon-god not seen by the 'Nalini'. The poet is himself the secret lover and the composer as well as the reciter of the fifty verses at the verge of his ordered death. Poet Bilhana is known as the "Caura" which means a thief, that is a secret lover in the latter tradition.[10]

From Anhilvada the great left for far—South and stayed at the court of Vikramaditya VI, a brave Rajput prince of the Chalukya dynasty of Kalyani. There he became the court poet (*Vidyapati*) of that emperor of the South and enjoyed honour and respect equal to that enjoyed by the emperor himself.[11] But how deep are the roots of the love and affection for one's motherland which penetrate inside the mind of a being ! Bilhana, enjoying the royal patronage of the greatest Indian prince of the time, is impatient to have just a chat with his Kashmirian brothers who, in his opinion, are possessed of such an insight as can attract the very essence of a doctrine.[12]

Bilhana, while staying at the Chalukya court, composed two important works. One of them is a historical epic poem known as the "Vikramanka-Deva Charitam" in which he has narrated in beautiful poetic style the history of the family of his patron Vikramaditya VI. The other one is a drama known as the "Karna Sundari Natika." It is the only available drama composed by dramatists of Kashmir. Drama was a very popular art in his land. It enjoyed royal patronage all along the Hindu Period of History. But it deteriorated during the reign of some Muslim rulers who to thought it to be opposed to the doctrines of Islam.

Bilhana has been described by Kalhana, in his Raja Tarangini. He has himself narrated some of his history in the last canto of his epic. The gap in his history, as said above, is filled by the literary tradition. He is, on the one hand, one of the greatest Indian poets who composed historical poetry in Sanskrit and, on the other, one of the most important authors of the Indian lyric poetry. His style in the 'Caurapancasika' is elegant and charming and in the 'Vikramanka-Deva-Charitam' it is forceful and scholarly. His 'Karna Sundari' is sufficiently interesting as a piece of dramatic art. Its Prakrit is very beautiful. So, Bilhana, as a poet, is one of the glorious sons of the land of Kashmir. This land especially the village Khonamooh can ever feel proud of having produced a poet like him.

Notes & References

1. एको भागः प्रकृतिसुभगं कुङ्कुमं यस्य सूते।
द्राक्षामन्यः सरससरयूपुण्ड्रकच्छेदपाण्डूम। (वि. दे. च.)

2. स्थाने स्थाने सुकृतवसतेर्मण्डलाग्रावतंसा।
धर्मस्याविष्कृनकलिभयस्याङ्गसक्षा बभूवुः।। (Ibid.)

3. व्याख्यास्थानान्यमलसलिला यस्य कूपाप्रपाश्च। (Ibid.)

4. (i) काश्मीरेभ्यो विनिर्यात राज्ये कलश भूपतेः।
विद्यापतिं यं कार्णाटश्चक्रे पार्मीडिमूपतिः। (रा. तरं.)
(ii) दिशि दिशि कृताः सम्पदः साधु भोग्याः। (वि. दे. च.)

(iii) प्राप्ता योग्यैः सह कलहतः कुत्र नौच्चः जय श्रीः ।। (Ibid.)

5. See "Bilhana Kavyam" and "Vidya Sundaram".

6. अङ्गणं तदिदमुन्मदद्विपश्रेणिशोणितविहारिणो हरेः । (शां. पद्ध.)

7. उल्लसत्तरुणकेलिपल्लवां सल्लकीं त्यजति किं मतङ्गजः । (Ibid.)

8. निरर्थकं जन्म गतं नलिन्याः यया न दृष्टं तुहिनांशुबिम्बम् । (Ibid.)

9. उत्पत्तिरिन्दोरपि निष्फलैंव द्रृष्टा विनिद्रा नलिनी न येन । (Ibid.)

10. यस्याश्चौरः चिकुरनिकरः कर्णपूरो मयूरः ।

11. राज्ञोऽग्रे ददृशे तुङ्ग यस्यैवातपवारणम् । (रा. तरं.)
See also above No. 4.

12. गोष्ठीवन्धः सपदि सुजनैः सारनिष्कर्षदक्ष प्रज्ञालब्धसतुतिभिरीवरादस्तु
काश्मीरकैर्मे । (वि. दे. च.)

12

Lalleshwari : An Apostle of Human Values

K. N. Dhar

The cultural heritage of a country secures sustenance from the philosophy of life nurtured by its people from the time man awoke to consciousness of self and spirit. This search for spiritual values can in no way be the last word at any stage since such pursuits are cumulative in character and content; this edifice comes into being steadily, hammered into proper shape by savants and saints from time to time. However, it calls for re-interpretation every day so that the erring human being, with all his frailties, does not descent to animality. This is the veritable theme of Lord Krishna's message in Bhagwad Gita. In our happy valley Lalleshwari projected such human values so dear to Kashmiris from the dawn of history.

CONCILIATION

An attitude of conciliation, instead of confrontation, can be gleaned from the pages of *Nilamata Purana* wherein Lord Buddha has been acknowledged as an incarnation of God–Avatara.[1] Buddhism was essentially a revolt against Brahmanism yet, the catholic Brahmin, with his proverbial forbearance, did not use the same language or adopt the same attitude as the Buddhists had employed with respect to Brahmanism. The healthy approach of Kashmiri Brahmins was never negative in essence. In this connection, we can safely assert that Lalleshwari, a vigilant sentinel of Kashmir culture, displayed the highest magnitude of courage and foresight in those not very auspicious times, beckoning man not to discriminate on the basis of religious labels : "मो जान ह्योंद तॅ मुसलमान।" It was actually the continuation of that catholic attitude of mind displayed by Kashmiris from time immemorial.

CAPRICIOUS TIME

However, time does not maintain a uniform tenor or temper; it is at times moody and capricious. And when the political map of Kashmir was redrawn in the thirteenth-fourteenth century, by the induction of Sultans over the Kashmir scene, this accommodation of head and heart received a jolt.[2] Kashmiris became oblivious of their pristine past, the present consequently got divorced from it, multilating its brilliant face and its attendant decorum. During those unsavoury times, Lalleshwari, fortified to her marrow by the innate strength of her conviction, rose to the occasion and strove hard to put an end a dismal era of persecution and vandalism. In this crusade her tools were not abjuration but affirmation; bitterness changed hands with sweet and more persuasive compromise. Having elected to tread this path of self-suffering she became a model for the millions of her countrymen to abjure the mundane and propitiate the sublime. It was no less than a miracle by which the sufferings of the people lost their sting and they learnt to bear these with stoical resistance. They were exhorted to rise above the self reach up to the super-self at which stage pleasure or pain have no relevance or meaning.[3] Some say it was self-deceit, fleeing from the actual life, rather self-forgetfulness to feel shy of the stark realities of life. The most apt answer to this faulty assertion is provided by every-awake lalleshwari herself in these words:

गाल कड़िनम बोल परिनम
दपनम नि यस युथ रुचे।[4]

(Some may heap cavil on me, even some may curse me; they may say whatever they like to say. Some may worship me with the flowers of inherent cognition, yet I do not fell ruffled with this kind of impeachment or praise since I am concerned with my own self and do not grudge what others have to say about me.)

MUSLIM RULE

The Muslim rule over Kashmir sounded the knell for the use and propagation of Sanskrit. Bilhana, the famous lyricist of Kashmir, had once eboasted that "in their household, Kashmiri women even speak Sanskrit and Prakrit as fluently as their mother-tongue."[5] It was now an old wooden story. However, a bridge was to be build between the present and the past for which Sanskrit had been a very potent instrument; but the general public had lost contact with it. Persian was the order of the day in its stead. So Lalleshwari chose to speak to the people in their own idiom and Kashmiri became the vehicle of her message. In this way, she did not only make her message more intelligible and comprehensive to the masses but also achieved the purpose of bridging the gulf between the past and the present.

HEALING TOUCH

In her time the friction between the past and the present was acute; hence she, like an alchemist, by her healing touch, saved Kashmiri culture from being eroded and bruised. Her clarion-call to assimilate human values in those dark days won for her the esteem and acclaim of Hindu and Muslims alike and the edge of ruthless proselytisation got blunted. It was no mean achievement on her part to unite the lost children of God, when every effort was being made to segregate them from one another. Her message was so universal and appealing that the tallest of Muslim Rishis of Kashmir, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani, made her his ideal and expressed what he owed to her in these words:

तस पदमानपोरिच लल्ले
तम गले अमरटथ च्यवो।
सौ सानी अक्तार लौले
तिथिय म्य वर दितम दिवो।[6]

(That Lalla of Padampur (Pampore) was fortunate enough in gulping the ambrosial nectar in droughts; thereby she won our adoration as an incarnation of immortal divinity. O! benevolent God, grant me also such a boon).

Lalla's message couched in quatrains called *Vaks* is very simple and straight, bereft of any curves or terseness. It is actually an exhortation to man for, self search and consequent self-cognition. It is a ready-made manual on self-search and consequent self-edification

छांड़ान लूसिस पोनी पानस
खय्थ ग्यानस योत न काँह
लय करमस वाचिस, मय खानस
बर बर बान त च्यंवान न काँह[7]

(I felt fatigued by incessant self-search, thinking that nobody could partake of that, hidden perceptive knowledge; I, ultimately, got immersed into it and could find admission to the Divine-bar, therein the goblets are full to the brim, but none possesses the nerve to drink these.)

A PREAMBLE

Mental drill is preamble to self-consciousness. At that pinnacle of self-discipline mind gets tamed automatically and effortlessly :

च्यंथ तोंरग गगन ब्रम बुडि
न्यमशि अकि छडि यूजन लछ
च़तिन वगि येम रटिथे ज़ोन
प्रान आपात फुटरिथ पख्छ।[8]

(The steed of mind gallops through the sky; encompassing this whole universe. During the twinkling of an eye it can traverse millions of miles. He who is proficient enough to control its reins, check its wayward demeanour by clipping its wings in the shape of mastering his own inhalation and exhalation, can attain the stage of self-cognition.)

Worship, in the words of Lalla, connotes self-introspection. It has nothing to do with external paraphernalia:

मन पुश तै यछ़ श्शोनी
बावक कोसम लांगज़स पूजे
शिवस गोड दिज्यस अश वाने
छोंपि मन्तर शंकर बुज़े।[9]

(Mind is the flower-seller and faith flowers. Worship should be undertaken with the offerings of mental equipoise. Shiva is to be given a bath of tears. Incantations are to be recited in silence, without making a show of these. In this way only self-consciousness can be awakened from within.)

According to Lalleshwari, a realizer has to hammer out his mental attitude on these lines:

पर त पान यम सोमुय मोन
यम हयुवुय मोन दयन क्हयो राथ।
यमसिय अद्वयी मन सपुन
तमि ड़यूठुय सु गोर नाथ।[10]

(He, who considers his own self and others as alike, abjures distinction between "I" and 'you'; he, who treats days and nights alike, is undisturbed by pleasure of pain; he, whose mind is bereft of duality, whose heart beats for all alike; only such a realizer can perceive the highest of Preceptors—Shiva.)

WITHIN SELF

But that Shiva is within the self of the realizer, as inseparable from it as the smell from the flower. Immanence is self and transcendence is superself—Shiva, in the language of Kashmiri monistic Shivacharyas :

कोह छुक चटान अन्यथा वछ
त्रकुय छक त अन्दर अछ़
शिव छुय अति तै कुन मो गछ़
सहज़ कथि म्यानि करती पछ़[11]

(Why do you beat your breast for nothing ? If yourpossess unwavering intelligence, you shall have to seek from within. Shiva is seated there and searching him from outside will be of no avail. Do believe my word, backed with self perception.)

Lalleshwari's forte was Kashmiri Shaivism. This concept of

Kashmirian philosophy revolutionized the age-long attitudes of man—more so of the Brahmins. It advocated a casteless society[12] as also abhorred kitchen-puritanism.[13] The ailing Hindu society badly required instilling a health-giving dose into its rusty veins. Shaiva scholars of Kashmir diagnosed the disease rightly and prescribed such an elixir. Had not this philosophy of life come to the rescue of Kashmiris at that dismal hour of history, no Hindu would have survived in the 'land of Kashyap'.

VIABLE ALTERNATIVE

Lalla's *Vaks* are actually a Kashmiri rendering of Shiva-Sutras,[14] when this philosophy was born, no such predicament was there, as was faced by Lalleshwari in her own times. At best, Shaivites had to contend with the Buddhists,[15] whose attitude was also home-spun and not foreign in any way. But Lalla had to reclaim the lost faith of her brethren, provide a viable alternative to the enticements an alien faith was offering to the people at large, and, at the same time, in performing this double duty she had to be always cautions not to invite the wrath of the rulers. And while discharging her mission, she did not make a single enemy out of the other camp. Her message cut through the man-made barriers of religions and Hindus as well as Muslims became her votaries with equal gusto. Her appeal was humanistic and not sectarian. Her approach was of positive affirmation and not of negative nihilism; consequently it multiplied her friends. Her ingenuity in steering safe between the two antagonistic factions is unsurpassed. She was instrumental in replacing call to steel by call to human conscience; consequently, changing sourness to sweetness:

असि आस त असि आसव
असि दोर करि पतवथ
शिवस सोरि न ज्योंन त मरुन
खस सोरि न अत गथ[16]

(We, human being, did live in the past and we alone will be in the future also. From ancient times to the present, we have activised this world. Just like rising and setting of the sun, the immanent Shiva-Jiva-will never be relieved of birth and death.)

DISDAINED RITUAL

Lalleshwari did not preach any hard and fast religion; she even disdained ritual. She projected a way of life quite in harmony with our cultural traditions, in which a happy amalgam was made of what was good in Budhism, Hinduism and Islam:

शिव वा कशिव व जिन वा
कमलज़ नाथ यारान युस।
म्य अबल कास्त्यन बवरूज
सुवा सुवा सुवा सू[17]

(That Transcendental self may assume the names of Shiva, Vishnu, Buddha or Brahma. I, a forsaken lady, am concerned only with their efficacy in cutting asunder my worldly afflictions, it might be accomplished by one of these.)

She was not dogmatic or rigid. She welcomed the healthy wafts of wind coming from any direction anointing her body and soul with chaste divinity. She always kept the windows of her mind open, rejecting what was mundane and assimilating the sublime:

साहेंब छु विहित पान दुकानस
सारी मंगान केंछा दि।
रोंट नो कांह ति राछ न वानस
यि दपे गछ़ी ति पानै नि[18]

(The Super-Lord is supervising his shop with personal care. All the aspirants are eager to take away wares of their liking. Whatever you would elect to buy, does not admit of any intermediary; it is to be earned by our own effort, since the shop is devoid of any hindrance and even a watch is not kept over it.)

This is the acme of Lalla's message. Man has been exhorted to seek his own self from within, without any external aids. Self-effort is preamble to self-education, finally culminating in self-consciousness—Shiva—as she calls it.

As long as the silvery billows of the Vitasta maintain their rejuvenating rhythm, as long as the virgin snow on the Himalayan heights retains its unblemished splendour and stature, Lalleshwari's *Vaks*, soaked in the inherent values of Kashmiri culture and human understanding, will go on unimpeded to help man to recognize his own self and not to run after deluding shadows. The message of Lalla, portraying meaningfully the humanistic attitudes ingrained in our culture, will never grow stale, its fragrance and flavour are immortal.

Notes :

1. Nilamata Purana, edited by Dr. Ved Kumari, verses 365–66.
2. Rajatarangini, verses 203–205.
3. Dr. Grierson; Lalla-Vakyani.
4. Vakya Lalleshwari (Urdu) by Pt. A.K. Wanchoo, Vak, No. 44.
5. Vikraman Kadeva Charitam XVIII, 6.
6. Noornama, edited by Amin Kamil, Shruk No. 33.
7. Vakya Lalleshwari, Vak No. 31.
8. Ibid—Vak 57
9. Ibid—Vak 24.
10. Ibid—Vak 70.
11. Ibid—Vak 18.
12. Panchastavi, I, 14.
13. Parmartha Sara of Abhinavagupta, Verses 19–20.
14. Shiva-Sutra of Vasugupta.
15. Tantraloka of Abhinavagupta, I, Verses 25–30.
16. Vakya Lalleshwari—Vak 5.
17. Ibid—Vak 90.
18. Ibid—Vak 78.

13(a)

Sahja Nand—Nuind Reshi

(Tradition of Kashmir)

T.N. Raina

The syncratic character of belief and culture of Kashmiri has, all along its recorded history, been conspicuous. Right through ages Kashmir accepted, adopted and enriched the refreshing waved of though that reached the Valley. When we look deep we come across the traces of beliefs of the Nagas and Pishachas still cling on to our present day of beliefs. These may be blurred by time but they become obvious to a discerning eye. A vermilion painted rocked, may originally have been a sacrificial alter for a Pishacha clan, which became a holy communion place for new god or goddess. A spring canopied by majestic awesome elms, where candles are lit even now at nightfalls, is perhaps in tribute to the-Nagdevtas or even in memoriam to the love-legend of a Naga prince, Nagirai and Aryan princess Heemal.

It is beyond the scope of this article to elucidate these characteristic features of the composite culture of Kashmir. This lingering liberalism has often evoked comments from the orthodox outsiders to whom a Bhata (Hindu) of Kashmir appears to be more Muslim than a Hindu, and a Musalman of Kashmir, a Muslim, of "feeble" faith.

From times immemorial Kashmir has kept its impregnable passes open to all enlightened thought, although many ruthless conquerors were kept by it at bay. We find somewhere in 350 B.C. progressive Buddhist monks of Sarvastivad school fleeing from their persecutors, to seek refuge in Kashmir. By 4th century AD this school of Buddhist philosophy which was nurtured within the Valley, became a beacon-light of the faith of Central Asia, Tibet, Mongolia, Korea, China and Japan. The Buddhist literature is emblazened by the great Arhats and Shramans of Kashmir. Writing about Kumarajiva, one of the Kashmiri luminaries of this order, K.M. Panikar says. "His is the name which everyone in the sub-continent of India and should cherish".

Samyukta Ratna Pitaka Sutra of the Buddhists mentions that the great Kushan monarch, Kanishka led his entourage into Kashmir to play homage to a celebrated Rishi, Jayta. En-route to Kashmir the great monarch was worried whether Rishi Jayata would accept his offerings. When he appeared before the great rishi he prostrated before him and voluntarily subjected himself to certain indignities, and admitted the imperfections of his heart, and sought solace and guidance. The great Rishi cryptically told him "When the King come", the path is good, when he leaves, it is as when he came". This sixteen word reply to compensate this long and arduous journey of the Kushan Emperor into the Valley indicates the continuity of the order, and fearlessness of its Rishis.

By 8th Century AD, Sarvastivad School developed into the Trika Philosophy of Kashmir. As per past traditions a system of Sidhas and scholars of this Order kept the ancient torch alight.

The Sidhas or Rishis of whose names have come down to us are Vasugupta, Bhatta Kalata, Sidha Rama Kantha, Ulapaldeva, Abhinavgupta, Khemaraja, Yugraja, Jayaratta and in 12 century, Bhatta Baskar.

The tantric ritualism by 11th century had steadily over shadowed the realistic beliefs and philosophy of Kashmir. Like an over-ripe fruit, though fragrant and sweet, it became poisonous.

From Bhata Baskara till the appearance on the stage of Sidha Shatikantha, Sedamol the Guru of Lalla, we find a gap of bewilderment and confusion.

There are indications in Rajatarangini that Sufi kanlandars had by 11th century entered Kashmir. Their presence in the valley had revived the past memorizes. After all were not these Sufis leading a familiar way of life ?

The parallelism between Sufism and Mouastic Sivaism furnish an evidence that with minor differences the two philosophies were identical. Comparisons have been made by Abu-Rehan Al Beruni and others between the Upanishads and the Yoga Sutra and the ideology of Sufism. To quote Mr. M.C. Chagla : The Indian Philosophy has in its time influenced Arab philosophy and Sufism is a case in point.

In early 14th century Sultan Timur's persecution of Syeds, forced a great number of them to come to Kashmir. Although Sultan Shahmir had established the first Muslim dynasty in Kashmir by 1340 the people of the Valley had yet to accept the faith en-masse. In Sikandar's time (1387 to 1413) proselytization of the population was begun by a large number of these Syeds who had come to the Valley. Compulsion was alien to the way of life of Kashmiris. This must have been resisted. Some powerful people in the court of earlier Sultans time till Zain-ul-Abedeen, the Bud-Shah, came.to the throne may have thought it politic to accept the new faith. But proselytization by compulsion underwent a change during the reign of the Bud-Shah. Just over half a century after passing away of the Budshah, the Mirza Haider Daughlat made his first plundering raid into Kashmir Via Ladakh. He had this to say about Bud-Shah "In order to honour all the faiths of the world, he paid attention neither to infidelity nor to Islam".

This is an observation from an orthodox Muslim who ruled Kashmir ruthlessly for more than a decade (1541 to 1551).

We are indebted to Mirza, Dughlat to pass on to us first information about Sufism and Rishi way of life in Kashmir. According to his light and belief he comments "At present (1541-51) time in Kashmir the Sufis have legetimatised so many heresies that they know nothing of what is lawful or unlawful. They consider that piety and purity consist in night vigil and abstinence in food. They take and eat whatever they find, without even considering what is forbidden or what is lawful (food). They are for ever interpreting dreams, displaying miracles and obtaining from the unseen, information regarding either the future or the past. They consider the Holy Law second in importance to the True way and have nothing to do with Holy Law.

The chroniclers of Kashmir after Kalhan Pandit have failed to take notice of this tremendous religio-cultural movement of Kashmir. By the end of 16th century the synthesis had been complete and the Rishi order had become the way of life of Kashmir.

Lal Dad, who, according to the tradition had considerable influence on Sheikh Nur-uddin, the Nund-Rishi, was the first of this order, followed by Shaja-Nand-the Nund Rishi, Sheikh-ul-Alam of Kashmir. In his Shrokas (Shlokas) he says:

> One who does not have conceit,
> One who does not enter into controversies,
> One who would put in efforts to cross the ocean of life,
> He is in true sense a Muslim,
> One who adopts the true path,
> One who shuns acrimon, avarice, and attachment is the real Muslim.

13(b)

Shah-i-Hamadan

Ghullam Rasul

Kashmir is known for her hospitality. She has always given a warm welcome to friends and foes alike. Among the many who visited this land in the past were Saints, Sufis, desperadoes, rebels, exiled kings, queens and refugees. She natured them and made them comfortable by looking to their welfare.

Among these multitudes of guests I would like to dwell upon the great Syed Ali Hamadani or Shahi Hamdan also known as Amir-e-Kabir. Hamdan is a town in Iran, situated near the foot of mount Alaund which is under U.S.S.R. Its bazars are extensive and spacious. The town is known for its leather works and textile.

The grave of Abou Ali Bin Sina is found in the same town. Sayed Ali Hamdani was born in 1314 A.D. at Hamadan. His mother's name was Fatima and that of his father was Sayyid Shah-ab-ud-din. He was the sixteenth in direct descent from Hazrat-Ali through Imam Hussain.

He knew the Holy Quran by heart in his early boyhood. He studied Islamic theology and received instruction in mysticism under the guidance of Sayeed Alau-Din-Simnani and Sheikh Sarfa-ud-Din.

He believed that his education would be complete by undertaking a world tour.

He made intimate contacts with Sufis and Saints. It is said that he met 1400 Saints in different parts of the world. He returned to his native place, where he was asked by Amir Timur to leave Hamadan. He came to Kashmir with 700 Sayids in 1372 A.D. in the reign of Sultan Shahab-ud-Din. He stayed in Kashmir for four months. He then left for Mecca Shareef and came back to the valley in 1379 A.D. in the time of Qutub-ud-Din.

According to Hindu belief Khankah was first a temple named Kali temple and was a sacred place. When Hazrat Amir Kabir returned from Mecca, he went into the temple where he offered his prayers. After he left the place it was found that he had left footprints on that stone plate where he had bowed before God. That temple was converted at once into Khankah Moulla.

After the stay of two and a half years here he went to Turkistan via Ladakh. The third visit of Shah-i-Hamadan took place in 1383 A.D. but he had to leave Kashmir on account of his ill health.

He stayed at Pakhli for a few days at the request of the ruler of that place. From there he went to Kunar in Kafristan. He had a relapse in 1383 A.D. and breathed his last at the age of 72.

The people of Kunar wanted to bury him at Kunar, but his followers carried his dead body to Khutlan in Turkistan where his tomb shands to this day in all its glory. A monument to his memory stands at Pakhli. In district Hazara, West Pakistan, the mosque and Shrine known as Khankah Maulla is the main place where he held most of his discourses and discussions on religion and theology.

It was erected in 1395 A.D. by Sultan Qutub-ud-Din. Shahi Hamadan was not only a saint but an author of outstanding merit. He wrote Zakhirat-ul-Muluk and many other books on Ethics and theology. He was also a poet and his Gazals pertain to Suffism.

Shahi-Hamdan was survived by a son, Mir Mohamad Hamadni who continued the mission of his father and arrived in Kashmir in 1397 A.D. in the reign of Sultan Sikander, who received with open arms.

13(c)

Shah-E-Hamadan

D. P. Bhan

KHANKAH-E-SHAH-E-HAMADAN is one of the well-known shrines of Kashmir where both Hindus and Muslims worship in their various ways. The Hindus take the shrine as the Asthapan of Goddess Mahakali and for the Muslims it is the Khanakah of Sayyid Ali Shah Hamadani. Popularly known as Shah-e-Hamadan. Sayyid Ali Shah was greatly instrumental in the spread of Islam in Kashmir. He was a great Sufi, who was considered an authority on Muslim theology and philosophy. Shah-e-Hamadan has more than one hundered books to his credit in which, apart from religion, he has written on such secular subjects as jurisprudence, political science ethics and logic. Shah-e-Hamadan was a poet whose odes and mystic poems indicate a broad humanistic outlook on life as well as religion.

Shah-e-Hamadan traced his ancestry to Hazrat Ali and the daughter of Hazrat Mohammad, the prophet of Islam. On his conquest of Iran Amir Timur made things difficult for the Sayyids, who belonged to the Shia sect of Islam, and they had to flee the country to escape persecutions. Sayyid Ali Hamadani, accompanied by several hundreds of his disciples, left Iran and after extensive travels found haven in Kashmir under the rule of Sultan Shihabuddin and his successor, Qutbuddin. The ground-work for the spread of Islam already having been laid by Bulbul Shah, who was instrumental in the conversion of Rinchin Shah, the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir, Shah-e-Hamdan found the situation propititious for the propagation of the new faith.

Islam had come to the valley much before the Muslim rule. Its teachings had penetrated through missionaries which had found a fertile soil because of the wide spread distress and disgust against the fetters of rites and ritues that had been clamped by the Hindu priesthood over the lay population, Hindu rulers had made themselves vulnerable by internecine warfare that had encouraged Muslim adventurers across the border to make inroads into the valley, which brought Kashmiris face to face with a virile people and new faith. As such, therefore, the people were not wholly averse to the new religion or the Muslim rule which gave them a hope of redemption from the shackles of the rites and rituals as well as the lawlessness and tyranny let loose by the priests and rulers of the time. Shah-e-Hamadan backed by official patronage and the receptive people did not find it difficult to effect large-scale conversions.

Shah-e-Hamdan had paid three visits to Kashmir during his wide travels, the second being of a long period of two years. His deep scholarship and spiritual attainments made him many followers who spread the message of Islam to the nooks and corners of Kashmir. He was instrumental in erasing the vestiges of Hindu influence which persisted in the converts and the Muslim rulers of that time. He introduced different style of dress and forbade the performance of Yagnya and other rituals in which the Muslim rulers at that time continued to indulge.

Shah-e-Hamadan came in contact with the local spiritualists of the time such as Lalleshwari and Sheikh Nooruddin, and had long discourses with them on spiritual and philosophical subjects. In fact, it gave a new blend to Sufism in Kashmir which later flowered into the order of Muslim Rishis, who rose above the constraints of religion and attracted both Muslim and Hindu devotees.

Islam had come to the valley much before the Muslim rule. Its teachings had penetrated through missionaries which had found a receptive [illegible] of the [illegible] among the [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible] that had been [illegible] by the [illegible] over the [illegible] people [illegible] rulers had made them [illegible] the [illegible] Kashmir [illegible] the [illegible] brought Kashmir face to face with a new people and new faith. As such, [illegible] the people [illegible] of [illegible] people to the new religion of the Muslim rule which gave them [illegible] from the [illegible] as well as the [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] on the same. Shah-e-Hamadan backed by official patronage and the [illegible] people did not find it difficult to effect large scale conversions.

Shah-e-Hamadan had paid three visits to Kashmir during his [illegible] period of two years. He [illegible] spiritual [illegible] and [illegible] many followers who [illegible] of Islam to the nooks and corners of Kashmir. He [illegible] their [illegible] influence [illegible] and the Muslim rulers of that time. He [illegible] of [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible] in which the Muslim [illegible]

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14

Govind Kaul

Sir Aurel Stein

Pandit Govind Kaul was born in 1846 as the eldest son of Pandit Balabhadra Kaul (1819-96), who, by reason of his personal qualities, great scholarly attainments, and social position, was universally respected among the Brahman community of Srinagar. Pandit Balabhadra's own father, Pandit Taba Kaul, had been a Sanskrit scholar of great reputation in the closing period of Afghan rule in Kashmir. Being connected as hereditary 'Guru' with the important Brahman family of the Dars he had enjoyed a substantial Jagir, and this was allowed to continue when Maharaja Ranjit Singh's conquest in 1819 established Sikh dominion over Kashmir.

Pandit Birbal Dar, his patron, had held an influential administrative position already under the Afghan regime. But he incurred the suspicion of Azim Khan, the last governor from Kabul, and, persecuted by him, was obliged to flee from Kashmir to the Panjab. Of the adventurous escape which he made with his young son Pandit Rajakak, in mid-winter 1819, across the snow-covered mountains, and of the cruel treatment endured by those of his family he was obliged to leave behind, Pandit Govind Kaul told me interesting traditions. The experienced advice and guidance which Pandit Birbal supplied to Maharaja Ranjit Singh is believed to have contributed greatly to the success of the campaign, which in the following summer, placed Kashmir in the power of the great Sikh ruler.[1]

The high administrative posts which Pandit Birbal, and after his death his equally capable son Pandit Rajakak, held during the period of Sikh rule in Kashmir (1819-46), necessarily assured a prominent social position and comparative affluence also for Pandit Taba Kaul and his son Pandit Balabhadra Kaul. The latter was thus enabled to devote himself during his youth solely to Sanskrit studies, and to lay the foundations of a scholarly renown which made him, from an early date, a foremost figure among the Pandits of Kashmir. But the far-reaching political changes which followed the accession of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu to the ruler of Kashmir at the close of First Sikh War, in 1846, led to the loss of the family's Jagir and threw a heavy strain upon Pandit Balabhadra's resources. Though restricted to what income his functions as hereditary Guru and as a teacher of Sastras could secure, and maintaining throughout his long life a dignified retirement,[2] Pandit Balabhadra succeeded not only in giving his three sons an excellent education, but in accumulating also an important collection of Sanskrit manuscripts.

His tasks were, no doubt, facilitated by the support he derived from his close connection with the remarkably able men who succeeded Pandit Birbal as heads of the Dar family. Pandit Rajakak,

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Notes which Pandit Govind Kaul's son, Pandit Nilakanth, collected at my request among the elder members of his family and also among the surviving representatives of the Dar family, their hereditary patrons. In addition my recollection of data communicated to me by Pandit Govind Kaul was proved useful.

[1] Pandit Birbal is said to have been personally present at the fight on the Divsar Karewa in which the Afghans were finally defeated by Diwan Chand Misar and Sardar Hari Singh, Ranjit Singh's generals, and to have decided the issue by pointing out Jabar Khan, Azim Khan's brother and ablest commander, as the chief objective for the attach.

I may mention as an interesting relic connected with this event that in the palace-like mansion of the Dar family, a monument of departed glory, I found a number of fine Persian carpets and elaborate felt rugs which according to family tradition Pandit Birbal had been allowed to appropriate from the defeated Afghan governor's camp in recognition of the help he had rendered towards the Sikh success on that field of battle.

[2] During the latter half of his life he never left the house he occupied within the precincts of the Dar family mansion, though receiving frequent visitors from among those whom office or intellectual attainments placed high in the social world of Srinagar.

the latter's son (1805-66), had distinguished himself as an administrator already during the troubled times of the closing Sikh regime, and quelled a rebellion in the hill tract of Drava. When conditions had become more settled under the Dogra rule he rose high in Maharaja Gulab Singh's favour by greatly developing the shawl industry of Kashmir, then a monopoly and financial mainstay of the State. Endowed with a genuine love of knowledge and with that intellectual adaptability which has distinguished the best brains of Kashmir through successive historical periods, he had taken care to secure for his son, Pandit Ramjiv Dar (*circ.* 1830-83), not only a sound training in Persian and Sanskrit, but also some familiarity with English and with Western ways. It was no easy departure in days when close relations with Europeans were apt to be looked at askance as infringing upon the traditional policy of seclusion and the security it was meant to assure.

It was in intimate association with Pandit Ramjit Dar that Pandit Govind Kaul spent most of his early manhood, and the experience he thus gained of the world of affairs, of rulers and ruled alike, did much to widen the horizon of his thoughts and interests beyond that of the traditional students of Sastras. Pandit Ramjit seems to have been a man of an unusually active mind and of considerable practical energy. During his short but fruitful life he had the good fortune to serve a ruler so well qualified as the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh was to appreciate his varied mental gifts and activities. It was the cherished aim of the late Maharaja to combine the preservation of inherited systems of Indian thought and knowledge with the development of his country's economic resources along the lines of modern Western progress. Having proved his ability as an administrator of Kashmir districts, Pandit Ramjiv gradually became the Maharaja's trusted adviser in a variety of departments which were created to further that policy, including those of education, agriculture, sericulture, etc. The manifold administrative duties entrusted to Pandit Ramjiv did not divert his attention from scholarly interests, and consequently he kept Pandit Govind Kaul as much as possible by side wherever his tours of inspection, and took him. Thus, Pandit Govind Kaul was able to acquire a great deal of first-hand, knowledge of Kashmir and the neighbouring territories in all their varied aspects.

Pandit Govind Kaul had, from his earliest youth, received a very thorough literary training in Sanskrit under his father's direct guidance. In accordance with the traditions of Kashmir learning, he had devoted particular efforts to the study of the Alamkara-sastra and the poetic literature which is bound up with it. His stock of quotations from the latter seemed inexhaustible. He was thoroughly at home also in Vyakarana, Nyaya, and the Saiva-sastra, and he read widely in the Epics and Puranas. As far as Sanskrit literary qualifications were concerned, he was well equipped for the charge of the 'Translation Department,' to which he was appointed in 1874. By creating it, together with a State Press, it was the Maharaja's intention to diffuse a knowledge of Sanskrit works on law, philosophy, etc., among wider classes of his subjects through the medium of Hindi. Other branches of the same department medium of Hindi. Other branches of the same department were intended to secure the same object with regard to selected works in English and Persian.

It is needless to discuss here the practical utility of the scheme or the causes which, during the lingering illness of the Maharaja, hampered its execution in the closing years of his reign. It is enough to remember that it provided suitable employments for such highly deserving scholars as Pandit Govind Kaul and the late Pandit Sahajabhatta, who was to become another of my Kashmir assistants, and that among the works undertaken, but never finished, there was also a Hindi translation of the Sanskrit Chronicles of Kashmir.

In 1883 Pandit Rajiv Dar was carried off by a premature death. Soon after, the 'Translation Department' ceased to exist, together with several other institutions which had owed their creation to his stimulating influence. The last years preceding Maharaja Ranbir Singh's death in 1886 and the first of the reign of his son and successor were for Kashmir a period of transition. Traditional methods of administration and economic conditions, bequeathed by centuries of practical seclusion, were giving way, while there was no machinery as yet available to effect needful reforms on the lines developed in British India. It was in various ways a trying time for all those representing the intellectual inheritance of the valley. After a short spell of work as a teacher in the Sanskrit Pathasala, maintained by the Darbar at Srinagar, on scant pay—and that often in arrears—Pandit Govind Kaul found himself without official employment.

His learning and sound methods of scholarly work had already, in 1875, attracted the attention of Professor George Buhler, when that great Indologist had paid his memorable visit to Kashmir in search of Sanskrit manuscripts. The very commendatory mention which Professor Buhler's report made of Pandit Govind Kaul's attainments and of the help he had rendered,[3] directed my attention to him from the start, and the personal impression gained within the first few days of my arrival at Srinagar at the close of August, 1888, was quite sufficient to convince me how amply deserved that praise was. I was quick to notice Pandit Govind Kauls's special interest in those antiquarian subjects which had already let me to form the plan of a critical edition and commentary of Kalhana's Chronicle of Kashmir. I was equally impressed by his dignified personality, which combined the best qualities of the Indian scholar and gentleman. A short archaeological tour which we made in company to sites round the Dal lake helped to draw us together in mutual sympathy and regard. So it was to me a great source of satisfaction when, before my departure for the plains, Pandit Govind Kaul, with his revered father's full approval, accepted my offer of personal employment and agreed to follow me to Lahore for the cold weather season.

It was the beginning of a long period of close association between us in scholarly work and interests. It continued practically unbroken for nearly eleven years, throughout my official employment in the Panjab University at Lahore, and down to Pandit Govind Kaul's lamented death in June, 1899. Neither my visits on leave to Europe nor an interval in 1892–3, when he was tempted to accept employment at the court of Jammu on H.H. The Maharaja's private staff, implied any real interruption. It was, in the first place, my labours concerning the critical publication and elucidation of Kalhana's Chronicle of Kashmir, for which Pandit Govind Kauls's multifarious and ever devoted assistance proved of the greatest value. As to the character and extent of this help it is unnecessary here to give details. They have been recorded at length, and with due expression of my gratitude, both in the Introduction to my text edition of the *Rajtarangini*, published in 1892, and in the Preface to the commentated translation of it, with which, in 1900, on the eve of departure for my first Central-Asian expedition, I completed my labours bearing on the early history and antiquities of Kashmir.[4]

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[3] Cf. Buhler, Detailed Report of a Tour in search of Sanskrit MSS. made in Kashmir, Rajputana, and Central India, Extra Number of the Journal, Bombay Branch R.A.S., 1877, pp. 7, 17, 27. In the last quoted passage Professor Buhler mentions Pandit Govind Kaul's shrewd identification of the old local name of Leh (Loh in the Rajatarangini), and rightly states: 'His proceeding showed that he was possessed of a truly scientific spirit of enquiry.'

Nor need I give here details regarding the large share taken by Pandit Govind Kaul in another important if not equally attractive task. I mean the preparation of a classified catalogue of the great collection of Sanskrit manuscripts, over 5,000 in number, which through Maharaja Ranbir Singh's enlightened care, had been formed at the Raghunath Temple Library at Jammu. The support I received from the late Raja Sir Amar Singh, then Vice-President of the Kashmir State Council, and successive British Residents in Kashmir, including the late Colonels R. Parry Nisbet and N.F. Prideaux, as well as from my old friend the late Raja Pandit Suraj Kaul, furnished me with the means for organizing the labours by which, in the course of 1889-94, this very valuable collection was saved from the risk of dispersion and rendered accessible to research. They were effected mainly through Pandit Govind Kaul and our common friend the late Pandit Sahajabhatta. A full acknowledgment of their devoted services will be found in the Introduction to the volume which contains the descriptive catalogue, together with the plentiful and accurate extracts prepared by them from previously unknown or otherwise interesting Sanskrit texts.[5]

It would have been quite impossible for me, burdened as I was all through my years at Lohore with heavy and exacting official duties, to undertake the big tasks referred to, had not a kindly Fortune provided me in Pandit Govind Kaul with a coadjutor of exceptional qualities. With a wide range of thorough traditional knowledge of the Sastras and a keen sense of literary form he combined a standard of accuracy and a capacity for taking pains over details which would have done high credit to any European scholar trained on modern philological lines.

Though he was no longer young when joined me, he adapted himself with instinctive comprehension to the needs of Western critical methods, such as I was bound to apply to all my tasks. With infinite and never-failing care he would record and collate the readings of the manuscripts upon which I depended for the critical constitution of the Rajatarangini text, and also those of other Kashmirian works, almost all unpublished, reference to which was constantly, needed for its interpretation. Yet I knew that, scrupulously careful as he was about the formal correctness of his Sanskrit writing and speech, the exact reproduction of all the blunders, etc., to be met in the work of often ignorant copyists cost him a kind of physical effort.

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[4] Cf. *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, ed. Stein, p. xvii; *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, transl. Stein, i, pp. xvii, xxii sq.

[5] See Stein, *Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Raghunatha Temple Library of H.H. the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir*, Bombay 1894, pp. vi sq. xi.

It was the same with the labours he had to devote to the collection and sifting of all the multifarious materials needed for the elucidation of antiquarian problems. However much wanting in style and other literary attractions the Kashmirian texts, such as Mahatmyas, later Chronicles, etc., might be which had to be searched, I could always feel sure that none of their contents which might be of interest by their bearing on the realities of ancient Kashmir would be allowed by Pandit Govind Kaul to escape his Index slips.

The value of the help he could give me in regard to the latter labours we greatly increased by the familiarity he had gained with most parts of the country and its varied population during the years spent by the side of his old patron Pandit Ramjiv Dar. Though for various practical reasons I had but little occasion to use Pandit Govind Kaul in that role of travelling camp *literatus* which made his worthy Chinese epiphany, excellent Chiang Ssu-yeh, so invaluable to me during my Central-Asian explorations of 1906-8, he was yet exceptionally well able to visualize topographical and other practical facts bearning on archaeological questions.

But, perhaps, the greatest advantage I derived from his long association with my labours has the chance it gave me to study in close contact those peculiarities of traditional Indian thought, belief, and conduct which separate Hindu civilization so deeply both from the West and the East, and which no amount of book knowledge could never fully reveal to a 'Mleccha.' Pandit Govind Kaul's personality seemed to embody in a clear fashion some of the most characteristic and puzzling features which constitute the inherited mentality of India, traceable through all changes of the ages. Attached with unquestioning faith to the principles and practices of his Brahman caste, he would make no concessions whatsoever in his own person to altered conditions of life. Yet he was ever ready to explain to me how the slow adaptation in others was reconcilable with traditional tenets. His meticulous observance of religious rites shrank from no personal hardship or sacrifice; he would, e.g., strictly keep the fast days enjoined by the three different systems of worship traditional in his family, even when the chance of the calendar would bring them together in most embarrassing succession. Yet, in the privacy of my study or in the solitude of my mountain camp he was fully prepared to brush aside most of the outward restrictions to which the *profanum vulgus* might attach importance.

His strongly conservative notions were the clearest reflex of those which have governed the administration of Kashmir throughout its historic past. Their instinctive application by Pandit Govind Kaul to the modern conditions of his country helped me greatly in comprehending how limited in reality were the changes undergone by its social fabric in the course of past centuries, notwithstanding all foreign conquests from the north and south. In this unfailing grave politeness and courtly dignity I could recognize, as it were, the patina which generations of influential employment and social distinction have deposited on the best representatives of the true ruling class of Kashmir. Whenever Pandit Govind Kaul was by my side, whether in the alpine peace of my beloved Kashmir mountains or in the dusty toil of our Lahore exile, I always felt in living touch with past ages full of interest for the historical student of India.

A kindly Fate had allowed me, notwithstanding constant struggles for leisure, to carry my labours on the oldest historical records of Kashmir close to their completion by the time when in the spring of 1899 my appointment to the charge of the Calcutta Madrasa, with the far more encouraging prospect of freedom for my first Central-Asian journey, necessitated what seemed merely a temporary change in our personal association. In view of the new field of work which was soon to call me to the 'Sea of Sand' and its ruins far away in the north, I felt anxious to assure to Pandit Govind Kaul scholarly employment in his own home, worthy of his learning and likely to benefit research. By what appeared at the time a special piece of good fortune, my friend Sir George Grierson was then anxious to avail himself of Pandit Govind Kaul's methodical help for completing and editing Pandit Isvara Kaul's great dictionary of Kashmiri. It was a philological task of considerable importance, and for more than one reason I rejoiced then, before my departure from Lahore, this collaboration of the best Kashmirian scholar of his time with the leading authority in the field of Indian linguistic research had been satisfactorily arranged.

But Fate, with that inscrutable irony on which Pandit Govind Kaul, like another Kalhana,[6] loved to expatiate with appropriate poetic quotations, had decreed otherwise. The farewell I took at Lahore from my ever devoted helpmate was destined to be the last. From a rapid visit he had paid to Simla to see Sir George Grierson he had brought back an attack of fever which, after his return to Kashmir, proved to be of a serious type and ultimately was recognized as typhoid. For weeks his strong constitution held out, supported by the loving care of his family and such proper medical attendance as I endeavoured to assure from afar. But in the end he succumbed. Separated by thousands of miles at the time in the strange mountains of Sikkim, I learned early in June 1899, the grievous news that my best Indian friend had departed beyond all hope of reunion in this *janman*.

Pandit Govind Kaul left behind a widow, who, after years of pious devotion to his memory, has since followed him, and a young son Pandit Nilakanth Kaul, who, while prevented by indifferent health in early youth from following a scholar's career, has grown up worthily to maintain the family's reputation for high character and unserving devotion to duty.

The prolonged stays I was subsequently able to make in Kashmir before and after my successive Central-Asian expeditions had to be spent on work relating to regions far away, and wholly different in character, from what I have come to look upon as my Indian alpine home. But my love for Kashmir has remained unchanged, and so also my gratitude for the great boon it had given me in Pandit Govind Kaul's friendship and help. That I was enabled to prefix a record of his life to this volume and thus to do something to preserve his memory, is a privilege I appreciate greatly. I owe it solely to the scholarly zeal of Sir George Grierson, who has rescued and elaborated the materials which we had collected, in a previous common birth, as it were. For the personal service thus rendered the expression of my warmest thanks is due here in conclusions.

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[6]. Cf. *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, transl. Stein, i. Introduction, p. 36.

15

Late (Pt) Mukund Ram Shastri

(Eminent Sanskrit Scholar)

Prof. K. L. Kalla

Mahamohopadhyaya, Pt. Mukund Ram Shastri was born in a Kashmiri Pandit family at Mohalla, Sathu, Sadiqazi Zada, Srinagar, Kashmir, on 23rd of Maghar, 1917 (BK). His father Pt. Gwash Lal gave him a good schooling. Pt. Mukund Ram joined a Pathshalla where he learnt Sanskrit Language and qualified himself as "Shashtri" from the Punjab University, Lahore.

In the year, 1937 (BK), an Institute was organised under the supervision of Pt. Ram Joo Dhar at Shri Rambir Ganj, Srinagar, Kashmir with the purpose of getting all the Persian and Arabic books translated into Sanskrit. Pt. Mukund Ram was selected among others for this purpose.

The Pandit Ji attended the translation work at the Patshalla hall during the day; while he spent his spare hours and holidays at the homes of other scholarly Sanskrit Pandit in and out of the city of Srinagar, studying the Sanskrit language and literature.

These Pandit scholars being impressed by Mukund Ram's zeal and desire for mastering Sanskrit languages helped him and lent him authoritative books on the subject. So, it was in this way, that Pandit Mukul Ram picked up a lot about Sanskrit language and literature.

Maharaja Rambir Singh had a long cherished desire to get a treatise in Tibetan language called "Kangur and Tanjur" containing about 1,50,000 shlokas, translated into Sanskrit. The Kashmir Government, therefore, deputed Pandit Mukund Ram with one Lama Guru, Mr. Thomas Tamzel to learn Tibetian language from him. After having picked up the Tibetian Language for about one year Pandit Mukund Ram was assigned the translation work of the Tibetian Book named above. The then His Highness Maharaja Bahadur was pleased to grant him a cash award of Rs. 500/- in recognition of his success at this difficult job in addition to his monthly salary.

The Maharaja of Kashmir ordered the Pandit Ji to accompany the Lama Guru to Paddar (a place in Kishtwar, J&K State) for conducting research on saphinres and diamonds. After some time however, the Pandit Ji came into contact with one Mr. Pope Ved, who was preparing some books on Kashmiri grammar. The Pandit Ji was deputed as his assistant,and prepared a good material for the books of Mr. Pope Ved. Soon after this Pandit Ji was appointed as Sanskrit Teacher in C.M.S. High School, Srinagar, Kashmir.

In the year, 1948, BK. Sir Aurel Stein the then Registrar of Punjab University, Lahore, came to Srinagar. On his request Pandit Ji gave up his service in the C.M.C. High School, Srinagar and accompanied Dr. Stein to Lahore to help him in bringing out and publishing "Kalhana's Rajtrangini" the oldest chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir, on a monthly salary of Rs. 350/

After completing this assignment, Sir Stein recommended him to Sir George A. Grierson, the then Director General of the Linguistic Survey of India with his office headquarters at Bankipore, Bihar (India). Pandit Ji got employment under Sir George Grierson in his Department on the monthly salary of Rs. 300/- and was entrusted the work of linguistic Survey which work be executed successfully. After a number of years Pandit Ji returned home at Srinagar, Kashmir, where Sir George entrusted him the work of compiling and publishing many other books about Kashmiri Language and Literature such as *Dictionary of Kashmiri Language* and *Shive Parnaya*.

In the year, 1958 (BK), One Mr. A.W. Stratton the then Registrar Punjab University, Lahore entrusted Pandit Ji the job of preparing many other books such as "*Katam Bash Sutra*". In Annexure 'A' to this note is given a list of some of the books which he wrote for foreign scholars by way of notes, commentaries and translations.

The J&K Government, later established "Rajbir Research Institute Department" and requisitioned the services of Pandit Ji from the Government of India. He resigned from the Government of India service and accepted the state service where he served as Head Pandit in the beginning and as Officer-in-charge, Research and Archeological Department in the latter years of his life.

In the year, 1968 (BK). (1911 Christian era) Lord Harding Of Penshursat, the then Viceroy and Governor General of India bestowed upon Pandit Ji the Title of "Mahamhopadhyaya" in recognition of his Research and Scholarly works in the field of Sanskrit Language and Literature, Sanskrit Grammar, Sanskrit Poetry, Kashmiri Language and Kashmir history. Besides the grant of *Khilit*, Pandit Ji was allotted a Permanent chair and rank in the Darbar next to the "Rajas".

Pandit Ji brought out excellent editions of many important Sanskrit texts on *Shiva Bhakhti* (*Shavism*) Branch of Indian Religious Philosophy during his stay in the Research Department. These publications earned him a name and made his familiar to many distinguished Scholars in India and abroad as well.

A list of a few of these books is given in Annexure 'B' to this note.

On the 21st of Magher in the year, 1975 (BK). Pandit Ji retired as Officer-In-charge of the Research and Archeological Department, J&K State on the special monthly pension.

Pandit Ji's life which lasted for about 61 years came to a close in the month of Kartik 1978(BK) (1921 Christian era) and he made exist from this Mortal World leaving behind a widow, two sons three daughters.

Shri Mukund Ram worked on the following Sanskrit scriptures of works alongwith scholars Stein, Grierson, Stratton, etc. :

Annexure 'A'

1.	Kalhana's Rajatrangini	By Sir A. Stein.
2.	Dictionary of Kashmiri Language	By Sir George. A. Grierson.
3.	Shiv Parniya	-do-
4.	Ramavtar Chitra	-do-
5.	Krishan Awtar Lila	-do-
6.	Lallavakayani	-do-
7.	Isharshatak	-do-
8.	Book of Kashmiri Proverbs	-do-
9.	Samaskaras	By A.W. Stratton.
10.	Katakgrehsutri	-do-
11.	Kashmiri Shadomarts	By Sir Geroge A. Grierson.

Annexure 'B'

1. Shiva Sutra Vimarshini
2. Pratyabhijna Hridaya
3. Shiv Sutra Varttika
4. Shiva Sutra Vritti
5. Spanda Virtti
6. Spanda Vivritti
7. Paramarthasare
8. Kashmir Shaivism
9. Lalleshvari Vakyani
10. Vijnana Bhairabe
11. Kama-kala-vilas
12. Shath Trimshat-Tattva Sandoha.
13. Bhabodehara.
14. Bodha Tancha Dashika
15. Anuttara Prakashe Panchashika
16. Para Praveshika
17. Mahartha Manjeri
18. Janma Marana Vichara
19. Amarougha Shason
20. Tantraloka
21. Ishvara Pratybhijna Vinarashini
22. Tantrasara
23. Spanda Sandohn
24. Stava Chintamoni
25. Para Trimshika
26. Mahanaya Prakasha
27. Hindu Realism.

16

Pandit Hargopal Kaul

(A Great Kashmiri)

The truly great, however tried
In all events the test abide
The gloom of woods, the wild beasts' haun
Their manly spirits shall never daunt

Pandit Hargopal Kaul Dattatrya was born in 1905 Bikrami (1849 A.D.) in Kashmir. His father, Pandit Ram Chander Kaul, soon after his birth left Kashmir and settled in the Punjab. Pt Hargopal received his education in Lahore and Patiala. Immediately after completing his education, he got a job as Headmaster Sanatan Dharma High School, Sirhind (Punjab). He, however, soon resigned this job and took up employment in the Sutlej canal (Irrigation Deptt. of the then Punjab Government) he had a chance to proceed to Simla in connection with his official duties. The scenery of Simla enchanted him and revived the memories of the happy valley of Kashmir in his heart. He began pining for a visit to Kashmir. In his book, "Guldastai Kashmir" (History of Kashmir) he says that on seeing the mountains of Simla range his patriotism spurred him to visit the land of his birth-Kashmir.

On reaching Kashmir, he spent a couple of month in sightseeing and thereafter wrote his book "geography of Kashmir". After sometime, he was employed as the "Parcha Navis" (news.writer) of the State. In those days the "Parcha Navis" had to keep the ruler informed of all the happenings in the State so that the corrupt and merciless officers could be brought to book and the people saved from tyranny.

A terrible feminine occurred in the State about this time. Many officers, taking advantage of the abnormal situation, began to fleece the dumb and helpless Kashmiris, Pt. Hargopal could not put up with such a situation. He was a patriot of the highest order and an ardent well-wisher of the ruler. He placed the true picture of things before him. As a result, many corrupt officers were removed from service and the rest began to shiver in their shoes. The ruler was anxious to provide relief to his subjects and mitigate their hardships due to the feminine. Foodgrains for lakhs of rupees were procured from outside and distributed amongst the people. No efforts was spared to make them as comfortable as possible.

When the wounds of the famine began to heal and many corrupt officers were shown the door, some big guns in the administration guns in the administration started conspiring against Pt. Hargopal whom-they held responsible for the ruler's wrath on the corrupt officers. In those days much could be achieved through court intrigues. They succeeded in involving the Pandit who was eventually hand cuffed and lodged in Jammu Jail and also externed from the State. He had to rot in this jail for full three years. Immediately after his release, he went to Lahore and started the newspaper “Ravi”. When “Ravi” ceased publications, he started other papers like “Desh” “Reformer”, “Public-news etc. He was restless to do something for Kashmiris and this was why he started these journals. He wanted the Kashmiris to prosper and make their voice heard. He did not budge an inch from the path of patriotism and service to the people of the valley. Had he not dedicated his life to the service of the Kashmirs, he could have easily joined hands with corrupted officers and reaped a goodharvest for himself. But being a true patriot and well wisher of Kashmiris, he would never allow the rights of Kashmiris being trampled and the name of the ruler blackened in history. For this thing alone he suffered untold hardships and spend three full years in the jail. It was not the jail going of Gandhiji’s time when all possible facilities were made available to the prisoners and detainees. In those days the prisoners were kept in dark cells. Snakes and scorpions used to be their companions. Pandit Hargopal has mentioned about this in detail in his writings. Though many a time Pandit Sahib was sounded to apologize and get his release, he stubbornly declined to do so as it was against his dignity. This shows the metal which he was made of.

After the death of Maharaja Ranbir Singh he was allowed to enter the State. Immediately on his return to the valley he laid the foundation of the Sanatan Dharam Sabha in Kashmir. He infused a new life in Kashmiris and revived their sagging morale. He started a crusade against the pernicious social customs which were deeply entrenched in the society. This was no easy task, whatever he could do, he did. And he did succeed to a great extent in this mission.

He was a great orator. He used to participate in public meetings while in Punjab and would keep the audiences spell bound. Even in his old age he was known for his oratory. He would keep the audiences spell bound. He would attract very large audience whenever he spoke. In his speeches in Kashmir he would launch a bittering attack on bad social customs and political bunglings. His mission was to rid the society of all the evils.

He never hesitated to criticize the administration even in those dark days of autocratic rule, when things so warranted. He would forego all comforts in order to serve the Kashmiri People. Apart from working in the political, religious and social fields, he adopted the spreading of education, particularly girls', education as a mission of his life. He helped in establishing many educational institutions. Besides, he started tailoring, knitting, spinning and other such classes for women. His foresight was marvellous. In this he also yoked his daughter, late Shrimati Padmavati who gave a practical shape to his ideas.

Unfortunately, his enemies again began to do him down. He was accused of injuring the religious feelings of a community and exile for three years. During this period he wandered in the plains of the Punjab always thinking of Kashmir and Kashmiris. Finally, he was exonerated. He returned to the valley and was given a rousing reception on arrival. This pandit lost no time in getting involved in the services of the people again. The Sanatan Dharam Sabha, which was lying dormant was reactivated. He worked hard to ameliorate the lot of widows and orphans and engaged himself night and day in social work. He passed away at the age of 75.

He used to live like ancient rishis and saints. He had got small cottage constructed in his yard and lived in that like a "grahast sadhu". His diet was very simple and his dress was also simple. He was known for his hospitality. His memory was very sharp. He would never waste time. If he had nothing to do, he would write for paper so that the people outside may get acquainted with for conditions obtaining in Kashmir. He was a poet also and had adopted "Khasta" as his pen name. His literary achievement have been highlighted by Dr. Sarvari in his book "Do Bhai Do Adib." But ultimately the love for people made him forget about poetry. He was fluent speaker in English also. Although he had not passed any law examination' he was highly competent lawyer and attained great height in this profession. But he always tried to settle disputes amongst parties out of court. He would give free legal aid to helpless and poor.

It is a pity that such a great hero has been almost forgotten by us. Had he been born in some other Community he would have been remembered with great pride and memorials would have been put up for him. It is tragic that who gave up his everything for the service of the people of this Kashyap Bhoomi, suffered imprisonment and exile for them, made great sacrifice, should be forgotten in this manner.

Pandit Hargopal Kaul worked for the improvement of the people in a dark age when there was despotic rule here. People were terribly frightened and demoralized and it was he who tried to raise their morale. No tribute will be two great for such a stalwart. It is our duty to honour him. Better late than never.

17

Prakash Bhatt's Ramayana

Prof. K. L. Moza

Prakash Bhatt's *Ramayana* is a poetic synthesis and unification of the Ramayanic, the Puranic, and the Mahabharata lores as these existed in oral tradition in the eighteenth century southern Kashmir. The devout bard's exemplary imagination, besides the Puranic and Mahabharata lores, textures the story of Rama with the socio-religious customs and rituals prevalent in his contemporary Kashmir. In the ecstasy of devout composition the poet interweaves with his narrative, his knowledge of astrology and the Kashmiri Ramayanic folk-lore. Prakash Bhatt's Ramayana is an inextricable blending together of the aesthetic and the didactic. Throughout the epic the poet again and again attempts an interpretation of the Ramayanic symbolism and his interpretations keep varying constantly with the struggle against all carnal temptations for the realisation of Shiva, seeks to inculcate among his readers a high moral sense. The synthesized and unified scriptural lore marshalled in the devotional literary composition forms a significant part of the religious consciousness of an average Kashmiri Hindu. For the last two hundred years Prakash Bhatt's Ramayana has been repeatedly tuned to music by religious congregations and devout individuals. This is an eloquent testimony to the great popularity of this superb poetic artifact. In his ignorance about the topography of the Indian sub-continent and a complete lack of historical consciousness, the puritan bard, with little erudite scriptural knowledge, rigidly particularizes the spatial and temporal co-ordinates of the principal incidents and characters in the story of Rama. This lends a charming local colour to the devout literary composition. Prakash Bhatt has interpersed his light narrative with profoundly devotional lyrics. The imagery in these lyrics bears a distinct and ingratiating impress of captivating Kashmir landscape under the seasonal flux.

Prakash Bhatt's Ramayana opens with the poet's thanks-givings to Lord Vishnu for incarnating as Rama to eradicate evil and to restore moral order upon the terrestrial surface. In the conformity to Kashmiri folk tradition the introduction to the epic is a rambling extollation of the lord who developed in man an introspective predilection for appreciating His unstinted mercies and bounties. In his monistic pre-occupations, the poet, identifying Rama and Krishna as a single divine being Narayana, extols His bounteous efforts for the preservation and spiritual upliftment of mankind. Prakash Bhatt glorifies Sita whom he regards a personification of non-attachment and truth. He sings about the abstinence from carnal indulgence and sensual pleasures as an indispensable condition for God realization. The poet regards intellectual and materialistic pride a great impediment to spiritual progress. He emphasizes the role of a Guru in leading a detached suppliant to spiritual bliss.

Prakash Bhatt invites his readers to supplicate themselves before the single tusked King Ganapati who is the protector of mankind. Together with Kumara, Ganapati dispels the gloom of ignorance. The poet extols the benedictions of Guru which steer a suppliant disciple across the worldly ocean. He involves Lord Shiva, who is resplendent like the sun, to illumine human mind with knowledge. He is ecstatic at feeling inspired to chronicle. Rama's glorious deeds and instructs his readers, purged completely of intellectual pride, to scan the didactic element in the chronicle with assiduous attention. The poet seeks to inculcate this consciousness among readers that the punishment of the evil deeds performed in youth visits an individual in old age. He emphasizes the importance of abstinence from sensual indulgence in the temporal span of existence for the attainment of heaven and immortality. For Prakash Bhatt a perpetual introspective analysis of the self alongside with an assiduous struggle against all carnal temptations is the only path for the realization of Self and God. He deplores man's propensity to succumb to carnal passions resulting in a neglect of the assiduous effort and discipline for self-realisation. According to the poet the Brahman incarcerated in an adamantine frame is realizable only through perpetual and conscious effort. The union of Brahmin with Brahman becomes possible only when the gloom of ignorance clouding human mind and intellect is dispelled. The union leads to a penetrating insight into the essence of the cosmos. By directing all sense perception towards the self, an individual, purified of all sensual passions, enjoys a glorious vision of Lord Vishnu. He realizes that his self is an infinitesimal part of the Brahman and his body a non-entity. The poet warns readers against losing emotional equipoise in the sorrows and joys which Time brings in his train. The physical world, exciting an individual's youthful sense-perceptions, leads him to sensual indulgence and the utter futility of such an existence dawn upon him only his senescence. Prakash Bhatt cherishes and advocates the ideal of perpetual struggle against moral evil and carnal temptations. He invites the readers to listen with devout and concentrated attention to the tale of King Dasharatha, the father of Rama, who in spite of his exemplary high piety, died a miserable man for the accidental killings of Shravana. The poet seeks to inculcate an importunate consciousness among the readers that no person can escape divine punishment for his evil deeds. He professes a vindication of the superintendence of divine justice upon human affairs. Prakash Bhatt transparently claims the Ramayanic tale, as narrated by him, will purge his readers of all evil propensities and divorcing untruth they will enjoy befriending truth in their social conduct. He extols an unconditional surrender to the will of God like Vibhishana and an assiduous purging of the mind of all evil propensities. The devout poet has a firm faith in the unstinted bounties of Lord Shiva, the unfailing protector of all truthful persons.

According to Prakash Bhatt Sita in the Ramayana symbolizes divine will : Rama and Laxmana are both striking personifications of truth : Hanuman is a towering embodiment of courage for a indefatigable resistance of evil and the libertine Ravana is vanquished by the truth personified by Rama. The poet in figurative language, advocates eradication and elimination of evil and untruth, through an attitude of non-attachment. He regards mercifulness and godliness an unfailing panoply against the incursions of evil. For Prakash Bhatt Angad, Sugreve, Jambavana and Vibhishana symbolize spiritual knowledge and all virtuous human qualities; Kaikeyi symbolizes human emotional flux; Dasharath is an embodiment of truth and Kaushalya symbolizes pre-determined human destiny. The poets is convinced that man is the facade of a temple where all good resides. He emphasizes the necessity for guarding it against the polluting influences of all evil. An inordinate sexual passion and ego-centricity are insuperable impediments to spiritual progress. Human mind can be cleansed of all evil through a meticulous observation of the spiritual and moral instructions of Guru. An aspiring individual, deserving grace and benedictions for his devoted service, is initiated by his Guru into the spiritual discipline which leads him to the realisation and identification of his self. An individual can enjoy an insight into his essential being only by shunning vanity and pride. Humility and supplication symbolized by Mandodari in Ramayana are necessary conditions for the realisation of the truth. The spiritually elevated Gurus, down the immemorial generations, have been instructing their devout disciples, absolved and purged of all-passions, in spiritual discipline leading to the realisation of four-armed Vishnu. Prakash Bhatt is emphatic in his assertion that the story of Rama, dispelling away all impending and imminent evils, leads to an experience of profound spiritual bliss.

Through a dialogue between Lord Shiva, and his consort Paravati, Prakash Bhatt in the introduction to his Ramayana outlines Ravana's evil deeds necessitating Lord Vishnu's incarnation as Rama for the restoration of moral order upon the terrestrial globe. Parvati reveals a sensitive concern for the redemption of the people of Kaliyuga whom the prevalent unrighteous social ethos will lead to utter spiritual perdition. A constant temptation for indulgence into sensual delights will prevent them from striving for the attainment of salvation and immorality. Lord Shiva holds out the prospect of their redemption in seeking refuge in Rama. The people of Kaliyuga, revelling in carnal dissipations, will be absolved of their sins even by a casual remembrance of Lord Rama. Those who consciously dwell upon His bounties will be bless with a vision of the Lord and perpetual spiritual bliss. The vision of the lord will illumine their clouded intellects just as a lamp dispels the enveloping gloom. The people listening to the story of Rama with devout attention will attain longevity and their intellects will be purged of all evil propensities. Lord Shiva mentions how Ravana, a disciplined performer of great penances and austerities, will become the master of Lanka, Besides numerous other boons, he will be granted invincibility to the attacks of all gods and demons. Considering man ridiculously punny, he will seek no divine protection against him. Therefore Ravana will unleash a reign of terror and unrighteousness. Ravana's demoniac defiance of piety and righteousness will make the Mother Earth to tremble. Supplicating before Vishnu, she will implore for the restoration of piety and righteousness in the world. On this Lord Vishnu will incarnate at Rama, a human being, for the destruction of Ravana, the scourge of humanity. In his infinite mercy the Lord Shiva also foretells the incarnation of the Mother Earth as Sita and metamorphosis of gods into apes, chimpanzees, gorillas, baboons and bears for constituting the battalions of Rama's ever victorious army. This dramatized outlining of the story of Rama is one of the most ingratiating features about Prakash Bhatt's Ramayana.

18

Zinda Kaul

(A Study)

Prof. A. N. Raina

Then on Man's earthly peak I might behold,
The unearthy self beyond, unguessed, untold.

—*Masefield*

Lakhshman Pandit was a poor but pious Brahmin, fairly educated in Persian. He lived in Habbakadal, the heart of the city of Srinagar, where in August 1884 (Sawan 1941) Zinda Kaul was born. Lakshman Pandit maintained the accounts of a neighbouring businessman who paid him five rupees a month, which was the only financial resource to the family. Contentment and detachment, simplicity and courage, were the virtues of this orthodox Pandit who was well-known in the neighbourhood for piety and a quiet disposition. Once a thief broke into his house and robbed him of what little he had. Except for one utensil called *tumba* used by the poor the place of a *samovar*, the kitchen was left empty. Early at dawn when the grandmother of Zinda Kaul broke the painful news of the loss to her son, Lakshman smiled and wanted to know if the *tomba* was there. On being told that it was there he remarked at once, "Mother, I thought we would miss our morning tea." The old lady, trembling in her only garment, stood puzzled while her son fondled little Zinda under the torn quilt. "Why, Mother, with one anna earthen utensils can be bought; prepare tea." In such an atmosphere of courage and contentment Zinda Kaul began his life.

At the age of the three Zinda Kaul lost his mother, and his grandmother filled the gap. He was put to the private school of Balak Kaul Jan where his early education in Persian began. With a thorough grasp of the alphabet he showed speedy progress. Lakshman Pandit's aim was to educate his son in Persian, and to attain that end the popular *Kareema* was put into his hands. Zinda Kaul finished reading it in one day. This immensely pleased his tutor who took his intelligent pupil's assistance in supervising the studies of his senior pupils besides his own classmates. This school was closed in the epidemic of 1892 A.D. (1894 B.K.) when Balak Kaul Jan died. Zinda Kaul was put to another school.

The private school of Pandit Damodhar in Gund-Ahlamar was a known institution where Zinda Kaul continued his studies. It was here that the poet in him awoke* Some of his classmates reported this "evil" attempt at versification to the tutor who gave a thorough beating to the boy. Writing verse was looked down upon then and Zinda Kaul suffered like Alexander Pope by not making any promise to write verse. This young, restless and precocious boy secretly wrote verse. Pandit Domodhar was not prosaic but he disliked the idea of a very young boy writing poetry. The opportunity for Zinda Kaul came when at a public meeting of the Dharma Sabha at Rughnath Mandir a handsome young boy still in his early teens got up with a *pheran* on and recited his poem on unity:-

جس سے گھٹ جئے یہ عذاب کٹھی
جس کے بازار میں نہیں سردئی

क्या है वह जिससे हो नसीब ख़ुशी
वह है एक इतिफाक व हमदर्दी

---

* الی واقفم گرداں ازیں فن که حرفے از دل هر کس برارم

کھا ھے وہ جس سے ھو نصیب خوشی
وہ ھے اک اتفاق و ھمدردئی

जिस से घट जाय यह अज़ाब कशी
जिसके बाज़ार में नहीं सरद।

Probably for the first time in the history of Kashmir such raw young intellect dominated the scene. There was enough appreciation and some of the respected elders took this handsome young boy in their lap and wished him a successful future. Pandit Har Gopal Kaul, gave a handsome prize to Zinda Kaul. Zinda Kaul felt that his poetry had won him applause and this encouraged him greatly. One of his school teachers, Khwaja Mohiuddin, greatly appreciated the achievements of his intelligent pupil who he helped and encouraged. Zinda Kaul remembers this sympathetic and sweet-tempered teacher with reverence even after the lapse of more than half a century.

Kashmir had by this time come under the influence of the western system of education and systematic teaching had begun to be imparted at various institutions at Srinagar. Lala Sita Ram was the head of such an institution where Zinda Kaul studied up to the fourth standard. Annas ten, which were then required for the purchase of text books, could not be spared by the needy father who decided to cut short his son's education and make him earn a living. His dejection knew no bounds. According to the then standard of literacy, Lakhshman Pandit, in his own way, had gone too far in educating the boy in Persian and English. In his school Zinda Kaul had created a good impression with his sharp intelligence, retentive memory and studious habits. His sympathetic teachers were pleased with his enthusiasm and had arranged text books for his free of cost.

Pressed hard by circumstances Lakhshman Pandit decided to stop his son's education and Zinda Kaul was apprenticed to a pioneer photographer, Pandit Hari Prasad, who arranged a coat and shoes for his new apprentice who had to maintain accounts and attend to the visitors at the Bund. Love of learning haunted Zinda Kaul Still. He educated himself quietly by reading a dictionary during the day and enriched his vocabulary by reading catalogues and newspapers. Besides, he read and replied letters in English received by various businessman on the Bund. For more than a year Zind Kaul continued in this state still he realised it to be a waste of his precious life

One day a lady refused to take her photograph and said, "I am not going to pay ; I look silly." The quiet clerk in the chair pleaded, "Madam, it is not the fault of the photographer." These eighteen months zinda Kaul saw the life of the Westerners—a clean, tidy and disciplined life. He learnt many good things from these Westerners, their cleanliness and punctuality.

تلخ کامی میں شکر لب و حلاوت نہ رہی

بس اب دل آزاد لب خمر کی طاقت نہ رہی

Zinda Kaul had made up his mind to prosecute his studies. So he rejoined school where he distinguished himself as the all-round-best student. His teachers were favourably impressed with his extraordinary intelligence, and in 1901 he passed the Middle Standard examination and only a year later Matriculated with distinction. The stability and respect of a government job lured him and he joined the Accountant General's Office as a clerk after having topped the list of the successful candidates at the departmental examination. Anderson, the then Accountant General, Appreciated Zinda Kaul's work as a clerk, but this new environment did not suit his genius. It was intellectual stagnation to read try and unimaginative notes*·

* اھو ھو کلرکی اھا ھا کلرکی
کفایت کرئے جھسے مالک کو دیکھتا   شکاری کو نو فٹ بنگالی چیتا
مصور کو دو چار گز سرخ فیتا   کمائی ہے کافی یہی عمر بھر کی
اھو ھو کلرکی اھا ھا کلرکی۔
وہ خرگوش کی چال آفس کو جانا   وھاں شام تک کام میں جی لگانا
اندھیرے میں کچھوے کے مانند آنا   بغل میں لئے توکری ایریر کی
اھو ھو کلرکی اھا ھا کلرکی

کھا کم ہے ان پیڈ سے پہلے بھی ہے۔   ترقی کی امید اک شبہہ بھی
بفضل خدا تیس کا گریڈ بھی ہے۔   مدستر سے کہا ہے کمی دو صف
اھو ھو کلرکی اھا ھا کلرکی

Though the Kashmiris regarded it a very great honour to work in the *Accootandi*, yet Zinda Kaul hated corruption, intrigue, and official slavery which resulted in his resignation. His experience of that period of expressed in the following poem:

ہم بڑے دفتر کے ہیں بلڈنگ عالیشان ہے۔ یہاں مہیا ہر طرف آرام کا سامان ہے
ہے کلرک یہ محکمے کا یا کہ اکرم خان ہے۔ کام یہاں ہو شہر کے مالکوں کا یہ ارمان ہے
بی رپورٹ اپنے جی کو جس دم سپرنٹنڈنٹ نے۔
بس وہی کھائی قسم بلدوں سے انکرٹی۔ ملت نے

By now the Government of Kashmir had begun to organize education and Mr. Moore had been appointed Principal of the local college. He was delighted to find in Pandit Zinda Kaul an eminent scholar and a capable teacher. "This previously developed Jivatma," as Mr. Moore called him, impressed Mr. Moore with his ability. Regarding his translation work, Mr. Moore was of opinion that Zinda Kaul's every attempt at translation was "infinitely better." Zinda Kaul was appointed as a teacher in the Hindu School on three rupees a month, and with the financial stability of that pioneer institution his pay was raised to seven rupees a month. What more did his father want !

As a teacher *Zinda* Kaul was a success. Even today is well-known as *Masterji*, a Guru, spiritual and literary. To teach and to read was his favourite, occupation, and with mathematics, philosophy, Persian and English as his subjects he passed the Intermediate examination in 1908. For seven long years Zinda Kaul worked as a teacher till he passed his B.A. examination in 1915 with Persian, History and English as his subjects. This period of his life is regarded by this eminent Pandit as the happiest time of his life. Even today he believes, like Socrates, in real service to humanity through education.

Kashmir was still a forbidden land and means of transport and communication were difficult. Passing of university examinations was a tedious task as the candidates had to travel in tongas all along the Jhelum Valley road for days "vomiting" their lessons of the way. Zinda Kaul left Kashmir for Lahore to join the Punjab University Training College for the degree of Bachelor of Teaching. The romantic genius of the poet was quite alive to the beauties of Nature along the way. The narrowing banks of the Jhelum made the river cry and the poet in Zinda Kaul cried too:

Ascending the heights of the Murree the poet wrote :

کوہ مری پر وتستا کی ہوا آئی تھی   یا عزیزان وطن کی وہ دعا آئی تھی
رازدان ں کا مجھے لب بام یاد آیا
بس کسر یہ تھی کہ شئی کانت نہ تھا دام نہ تھا   رنج غربت میں مجھے حب وطن یاد آیا
سفر مرگ کا توشہ نہ کفن یاد آیا   یاد آیا تو فقط شام مجھے یاد آیا

Lahore was an inferno with its scorching heat:

پرنسپل بیٹھے وہاں کرتے تھے عالمگیری   سامنے لرز بہ اندام تھے ہم کشمیری
کوئی غمخوار نہ تھا کوئی مددگار نہ تھا   ایسی حالت میں مجھے ولی رام یاد آیا
زندہ ثابت ہوا سو بار میں جو مر مر کے   گھر کو واپس پھرے بے رنگ تخلص کرکے
دربدر پھرنے سے آرام مجھے یاد آیا۔

In dejection Zinda Kaul returned home and took to teaching till 1922 when his reputation as an eminent scholar was established. This helped his to get a job in the Department of Archaeology where he worked till 1931. His services were then transferred to the Publicity Department wherefrom he was pensioned off in 1939 on the completion of his fifty-five years of age.

Since then Zinda Kaul has been living a quiet sort of life, pondering the deeper life which is the True Life. He attempted writing poetry in Hindi and published his "Patrapushpa," which lifts the reader "to an ampler ether where we hear the whisper of the Spirit who is the Good, the True and Beautiful" The "Patrapushpa" is a lovely collection of devotional songs aiming at an understanding of universal love and brotherhood. The poet has rightly called this attempt of his as "Autumn Leaves," and its free translation in English is highly instructive. These "Leaves" open with a poem, "Shri Krishna is Love":-

परमानन्द हमारे कविवर   सविनय उनको प्रणाम
कहते हैं सज्जन का मन है   मानो गोकल ग्राम ।

"The human soul has been likened to Gokul, a village in the Kingdom of Mathura (which is the whole human being!) The ruler of this Kingdom is the lower I with his queen Myness. He is a usurper and a tyrant and has made the people of Gokul (i.e. the thoughts, desires etc., of the mind) his slaves who have to cater to the tyrant's selfish desires."

Several other poems on Love are followed by भ्रातृभाव, a song on brotherhood, which is a dialogue in verse between a songbird and man, establishing the truth of universal brotherhood and sisterhood between Man and Miss sound of Space, Miss Ripplet of Water, Miss Ray of Sun, Miss Waelet of Air, Miss Moonlight, Miss Flame, Miss Coolness of Clouds, Miss Music of Forest, and so on. After the discovery of universal brotherhood and sisterhood, all these hail Father of the Universe, supporter of all, the final abode of peace !

Hindi did not suit him as it could not be the medium for the vehicle of his thoughts. Like Mahjur, who gave up writing in Urdu at about the same age, Zinda Kaul too took to his mother tongue, Kashmiri.

It is a poet in Kashmiri that we shall discuss this learned Pandit's work. He is, to my mind, the greatest of the modern poets in Kashmiri whose spiritual vision or mystic intuition penetrates the outer shell of the shadow-show of transient appearance "into the vital Presence within, that which forever abides as the central core of things, as the Reality."

Zinda Kaul has made a thorough study of Parmanand and Krishan Das, the two great mystic poets in Kashmiri. Their mysticism has left a deep impression on his mind. So thorough is his study of Parmanand that his translation in English of this great poet is in itself a valuable contribution of great merit to the understanding of the devotional philosophy of Kashmir. A profound scholar of Kashmiri mystic poetry, Zinda Kaul is in reality a true interpreter of philosophy. It was necessary for the poet to fathom the thought and imagination of some of the master minds. It was also necessary for him to get an idea of this language. His mature intellect understood all that was necessary, and his poetic genius sprout forth "in profuse stains of unpremeditated art". He did not write much for the obvious reason of his being out of tune with the times.

Unlike Mahjur, he did not hail the new age and refused to flow with the time and its forces. His poetry is very different from Mahjur's whose chief characteristic is flow : that of Zinda Kaul thought. If Mahjur is the creature of time, Zinda Kaul is the poet of Truth; and in his case time and its changes have little effect on him. He realises it himself, but candidly expresses his inability and disinterestedness in the affairs of life. Though possessed of an active mind he refuses to participate in this fussy life which has not been a source of happiness for him. His life, he will tell you with a smile, has been a struggle against failures. It is strange that such as eminent intellectual, who lived his life in the stormy years of the twentieth century, has little to say about events which shook the world, man and his faith. Politics has no fascination for him, but politics in its human form and not in its professional connotation, interests him. According to him there is too much of politics with us. The ancient Indian system is the ideal for him as it aimed at maximum freedom and very little government. Patriotism is his passion but not jingoistic patriotism. Like Tagore, Zinda Kaul wants to live again and again, for he loves his country "with its poverty, misery and wretchedness."

Zinda Kaul cannot be a popular poet like Mahjur. His diction is terse and at times too obscure and philosophic to be understood by laymen. He is the poet of selected few, mostly middle-aged, sober-minded people whose concern is the realisation of Truth. Some unimaginative critics, therefore, call Pandit Zinda Kaul the Pensioners" Poet.

Zinda Kaul himself admits that his reading has not been wide. He thinks of himself as an ill-read man of very few contacts. The only man of virtue, other than his father, who impressed him most as a well-read Brahmin was Pandit Shiv Jee Chikan who lived in his neighbourhood for long. He is the one who, according to Zinda Kaul, never did a wrong and never spoke a lie.

The only literature worth note which Zinda Kaul has thoroughly read are the works of the author of *Les Miserables*. Even today, when the poet has almost entered the "sans eyes, sans teeth"-stage of life, he longs to re-read that world classic. Every time *Les Miserables* unfolds something new to him. In English he has read Lytton's works, Arnold's *Light of Asia*, Vivekanand, Ram Tirath, Besant and Bhagwandas; in Urdu Ghalib and *Fassan-i-Azad*; in Persian Hafiz, and in Sanskrit the *Gita* and the *Bhagwata*. Of all the modern philosophic writers, he considers Dr. Bhagwandas to be highly intelligible and convincing. His explanation of the theory of evolution, the exposition of Law of laws and the interpretation of Hindu philosophy is excellent.

Zinda Kaul is a rationalist to the core with firm belief in the existence of God, the Supreme Order which shapes everything and without whose will "not a blade of grass moves." Like Milton in his blindness, Zinda Kaul bears His yoke and "only stands and waits." In the Universe there is a harmonious order, and science has realised that matter is vibrating energy. Higher physics is on its way to this great truth which will end the feud between the materialist and the spiritualist. This realisation will open the eyes of the West to the profound philosophic truth of the East:

* یچھ پچھ مہ ھار بیاکھا ھیتھ یور واتہ کاچھا
تس چھا کمی نشانن بر بر خزانہ ویسئے

यछ़ पछ़ महार भ्याखा ह्यत यूर्य वाति कांछ़ा।
तस छा कमी निशानन भर्य भर्य खज़ान व्यसिये।

دئے چھو دولک شعلہ دلدارس اندر
دل چھو لال بے بہا انسان سند۔

दिल छु लाले बेबहा इन्सान सुंद
दय छु लोलुक शोल दिल दारस अन्दर।

God, says Zinda Kaul, will be realised through Love "The heart within man is a priceless ruby and God is the luminosity of love in human heart." This Love is not the agitated fever of the warm blood of youth which 'dies out from kiss to kiss.' Man must devote himself to something afar, away from the sphere of sorrow ; and a study of art is necessary, even vital, to the realisation of that harmony. All art—painting, poetry and music—is the medium through which we pass from the material to the spiritual. In this respect art may well take the place of religion in its narrower sense.

‡ یی چھوہ لول یم یس کہند بور تم بور دیس
یی چھو لولک مرمہ یی اسرار میون
تار چون ادہ زانہ ہئے بیہ کار میون

यी छु लोल यम्य यस कांऽसि बुऽर तम्य बुऽर दयस।
यी छु लोलक मर्म यी असरार म्योन।
तार चोन अऽद ज़ान बऽई ब्ययि कार म्योन।

From 1941 onward poem followed poem and some of the noteworthy songs became popular. Some of these are:

स्मरण पनन्य दिचाऽनम, वदिहे मनुष्य, करनाबि तारख ना अपोर, वनन मंज़ लाल।

A critical examination of these poems reveals Zinda Kaul as a poet of rare genius who refuses to be hurried through life, who stands, waits, pauses ponders and reflects on the innermeaning of life. He believes in the "wise passivity" of Wordsworth, living aloof from this age of breakneck speed, Music Hall performances, quick-firing machine-guns and one-act-plays. Even so he is a progressive, believing optimistically in the forward march of progress. "The current is onwards though at times water may stagnate here and there." The flow at times is spontaneous and highly distinct and picturesque.

سورم سوہ لالہ رخ منس جلاو لوگ کزلونس
فیورم سو نار خرمنس لوگس نہ کینہہ تہ زیٹھنس
دلس ھیوتن - جگر تتیاو - شور ووتھہ زہ نار ھا

सुरुम सु लालरुख मनस जलाब लुग कजल वनस।
फुरुम सु नार खिरमनस लगुस न केंह ति ज़ेठनस।
दिलस हऽयुतुन जिगर तत्याव शोर बुऽथ ज़ि नार हा।

In Kashmiri poetry such poetical composition is rare and can easily compete, and even surpass, some of the excellent poetical expression in other language too. "Interrogation" is an exquisite lyric. It has been admirably translated by professor Kaul, in whose opinion "the Poem shows the possibilities of the Kashmiri lyric, what it can achieve in the direction not divorced from the present day idiom employing new rhyme scheme, and rhythm patterns and haunting refrains, medium rich in its "incantation" and beautiful imagery bodying forth the eternal why and the eternal *lol* longing of the human soul."

پننٕن کنٕن منز چھُس صدا۔ چھُس نافہ پانس نش کھٹتھ
لاران چھہ اما روس کٹ۔ پروت تہٕ ون ترآوتھ ژٹتھ
لاران تتھئے پاٹھن چھو دل۔ اتھ خور ترآوتھ۔ اچھہ وٹتھ
مشکا یوان چھس یارٕ منز۔ لم لم کڑان چھس سوے رٹتھ
سورتھ اکس وستس اندر۔ بیہ منز چھس نیران پھٹتھ
شمہن یمس ہیو دورِ پان۔ پونپر بیہا دامن وٹتھ
تس پتہ یہ مت مت نیرہ نا۔ پرتھ اکلہ ہندد جاما ژٹتھ
یدوئے اچھو نس چھوس کھٹتھ۔ چھا حسن جادو گاریا

पनन्यन कनन मंज़ छुस सदा छुस नाफ पानस निश खऽटिथ।
लारान छि़ अमा रूस कऽट पर्वत त वन त्राऽविथ चटिथ।
लारान तिथय पाऽठ्यन छु दिल अथ खोर त्राऽविथ अऽछय वटिऽथ।
मुश्का यिवान छस यार संऽज़ लम्य २ काडान छस सुई रटिथ
सूरिथ अकिस वस्तस अन्दर ब्यबि मंज छस नेरान फटिथ
शमहन यमिस होव दूरि पाऩ पोंपर ब्यहा दामन वटिथ
तस पत यि मत्य मत्य नेरिना प्रथ अक्य सिंदि जामह च़टिथ।
युदवय अछिव निश छुव खटिथ छा हुस्न जादूगाऽरिया।

The poet is a profound thinker with a substratum of the Hindu philosophy as the foundation of his poetic faith. Each mystic passaged occur her and there and read like the vakyas of Lalla at deliverance and emancipation. There is a subdued sweetness of the melodious lines giving expression to the groaning world with its deep cry for the spirit. The poet strikes an autobiographical note in this beautiful lyric. The poet's aim is not merely to please the ear but also to elevate the soul till it becomes united with the Divine, the Ocean of Bliss.

Zinda Kaul's approach to life is that of a Vedhantist. This attitude of his, is found explicitly in a poem which may be entitled *Across the river*. The boatman calls men on the bank to cross the river and to leave their worldly riches and wisdom here. The knowledge on the other bank is different.

اپارٕ بدلئے چھہ ودیا پرن یوگک چھہ سوہ بول چال
پروئے تہ یتہ شری گیتا پرو یوگئے ترو اپور

अपारि बदलय छि विद्या परन्य यूगुक छु सु बोल चाल
पऽरिवय त यति श्री गीता परिव यूगय तारिव अपोर

Prepare to the other bank:

گرہ روزہ یتی تہ کتھہ کیوت بھرو   چھٲری ترو اپور

घर रोज्य यती त कथ क्युत बरिव छऽरी तरिव अपोर ।

His study of Hindu Realism (Sivism) is thorough, and at times he gives a clear expression to Siva philosophy.

پنن مہ تیزہ کوئے آگور   یمن زرن اندر باسن
کونیر باوتھہ یہ دوے کاسن   گٹے ھندہ گاشرے لو لو

पनुन म्य तीजकुय आगुर यमन ज़रन अन्दर बासुन
कुन्यर बाऽविथ यि द्वय कासन्य गटे हन्दि गाशरय लोलो ।

Again کہنہ نہ آستھ یس دپان سمسار میون
پوز فقیرا نفس طرگس شاہسوار

पुज़ फकीरा नफस तुरगस शाह सवार
केंह न आऽसिथ युस दपान संसार म्योन ।

Again
رنگہ رست آستھ کھوتس ما رنگ لاگتھ نفس پچھ
چھوت کروھن تے ھور آمت یور آمت گندنے
تھانھ رستئے بانہ پلزیا بانہ رستئے تھانہ کیا
کن بنیتھ یم جور آمت یور آمت گندنے
پالہ ون تے گالہ ون تارہ ون تے مارہ ون
گاو گب سہہ تہ برور یور آمت گندنے
گٹہ پچھ چندر زن نامہ روپ اکھ اکھ کلا ویگلاوسئے
سوریس اندر لئے پراوہ زون سارے بنن توژ ماوسئے

रंग रुस्त आऽसिथ खुतुस मा रंग लाऽगिथ नक्श पुछि
छुत ऋहुन तई होर आमुत योर आमुत गिंदने
ठान रुस्तुई बान पलज्या बान रुस्तई ठान क्या
कुन बनिथ यम ज़ोर आमत्य योर आमत्य गिंदने ।
पालवुन तय गालवुन तारवुन तय मारवुन
गाव गऽब सऽह त व्रोर योर आमुत गिंदने ।
गट पछ चन्द्र जन नाम रूप अख अख कला व्यगलाव सऽई
सूर्यस अन्दर लई प्रावि जून साऽरिय बनन त्यच मावसय ।

He is a saint indeed who is बस्ती मञ्ज बनबास with love for mankind He is not an escapist, but, like, Wordsworth's Skylark, "true to the kindred points of heaven and home." He is out to reform not customs but the human heart which has असीम शक्ति infinite power to kill the wolf in man. In this gigantic task the does not hope to succeed alone but implore the divine help of Him :

فزا تراوتھ مہ کھنمت زس زمینس تل تہ پورن چھم
سیتھا دیوار لورن چھم ژۂ روستئے کیا کرے لو لو

फिज़ा त्राऽविथ म्य खन्यमत्य जिस जमीनस तल त पूरन्य छिम
स्यठा दीवार लूरन्य छिम च्य रुस्तई क्या करहै लोलो घटे हन्दि गाशरई लोलो।

It was natural for the poet to crave for evolution, for a peaceful change rather than for a violent revolution, for the poet wrote after his sixtieth birthday. Poverty and misery move him; the apathy of purse proud capitalists rouses his righteous indignation.

زاگن غریبن زورہ واٰل کھوژان نہ مالکھ مارہ ما
जागान गरीबन ज़ोर वाऽल्य खोचान न माऽलिक मारिमा।

As a human socialist and pacifist, he says :

बेछुन भंगुन थप लूठ हार, जानान छुख संतोष शम
केंह कांसि निश यच चुर न कम, बियसुन्द वुछिथ अलिफस न बम
अद क्याजि त्रावन तोप दह, अद क्याज़ि प्यन असमार बम।

In such an ideal society :

یلہ سارہ لگے اسہ توتھ دئے   یلہ پھیرہ پئے پریمک ژو پور
ساری بدن بز کن مدھس   روزی نہ کانھہ یلہ ھون بور
تی گو ژہ رامن نگر کھور   روزتھ بیپاری تر اپور

यऽल्य सारिनय असि टोठि दय   यऽल्य फेरि पय प्रेमुक चुपोर
साऽरिय वनन पऽज्य किन्य मनुष्य   रोज़ी न कांह यत्य हून ब्रोर
ती गव जि रामन नगर खोर   रूजित यपाऽरी तरि अपोर।

This is possible when man is free from all envy, competition and hate, and toils towards and vision of Beauty.

When Mahjur came and Kashmiri was flooded with his musical verse, Zinda Kaul rightly appreciated this poet :

فخر کشمیرس چھونا مہجور ہیو   پید آ صاحب سخن دانا کورن
یم غزل کاشر بلو انگورہ منے   سوبہ ون میخانہ دیوانہ کورن
مئے وچھتھ کر جائے خالی کانزہ وآں   مئے کشو دوپ بارہ احسانہ کورن

फखर कश्मीरस छुना महजूर हयुह   पैद साहिब दिल सुखन दाना कुरुन।
यम्य गज़ल काऽशुर बनोव अंगूरिमय   शुभवुन मयखान दिवाना कुरुन
मय वुछिथ कर जाय खाऽली कांजवाल्य   मय कशब दुप बार यहसाना कुरुन।

19

Radha Krishen Kaw

(An Eminent Indologist)

Prof. K. L. Kalla

Although Sanskrit had been in common use in Kashmir up to the advent of Islam, it lost its importance by and by and was finally replaced by Persian and Kashmiri. Still, however, there were some devotees of Sanskrit in the following years to quote a few would be pertinent : Pt. Keshow Bhat (Sikha) Pt. Har Bhat Shastri, Pt. Makand Ram Shastry, Pt. Raj Kak Ganju and Pt. Nath Kak Kalla. In the much recent past, Prof. Balji Nath Pandit, P.N. Pushp and K.N. Dhar were regarded as scholars of Sanskrit. But, so to say, Sanskrit became gradually a dead language and a Sanskrit teacher was looked down upon by both Kashmiri Pandits boys and girls. However, credit must be given to a number of private Path Shala teacher of Kashmir, who devoted their spare time in the evenings to teach this subject. Credit may, also, be given to Prof. Cheman Lal Sapro and Dr. Sheshi Shankhar Toshkani the Rashtrya Basha Pracharni Shakha members or keeping both Hindi and Sanskrit alive in Kashmir. Dr. Radha Krishen Kaw was yet another giant who did a lot to the cause of Sanskrit learning in the Valley. But, alas ! very few Kashmiri Hindus (Pandits) took notice of him

It was by chance and under strange circumstances that I happened to meet him; and I remained in his association for a few years before his demise. I had been working for my Ph.D; degree on "Loss of Faith and the Mid. Victorian literature" and I met him for his the valuable suggestions. He was good enough to say that ! must add one more section to my book and change the topic to "Loss of Faith in India and England". For this work he had promised to reward me degree of Doctor of Indology at his Sharda Peetha Research Institute.

I visited him occasionally at his Karan Nagar residence and was astonished to see him work with great zest and devotion, even at that age (he was in seventies). He worked in one ground-floor room of his residence which had tables, chair and benches ; and the other room housed his library which consisted of rare, works, gifts received from Indian and foreign scholars, and his own research publications. He was often seen either writing or typing something, and I was inspired to continue my own research project although my other colleagues tried to discourage me out of jealousy.

He commanded a grand personality and unlike most Sanskrit scholars he dressed himself like an Englishman with a felt on his head and even a stranger on the road might have been struck by his gait as the walked like a stalwart, taking long strides with a cane in his hand. Strangely enough he had no ego or vanity about him his being learned. One day he gave me a pleasant surprise by visiting me at my residence where he was very glad to see my father Pt. Nila Kanth Kalla whom he embraced saying "Once we were class fellows".

One day he narrated to me the story of his career in Sanskrit literature. During his school days he had been attending a Sanskrit class where "Dharam Shikha" was taught by the Sanskrit teacher in recess hour. After graduation as a science student, he had undergone training in Electric Engineering at Aligarh. He worked as Supervisor in the Electric Department for a number of years, but he developed an aversion to it as others often called him as a supervisor, which he did not like.

The taste for Sanskrit which he had developed in the Dharam-Shikha class enable him to pass privately B.A. and then M.A. ; in Sanskrit from Punjab University, Lahore; Later, he worked for Ph.D. on Pratya Bhijyan, an important aspect of Kashmir Shaivism; and was registered at the same University. It was unfortunate for him to submit his thesis in three copies to the University before partition of the undivided India took place. As such he could not get the Ph.D.

degree, till 1956, when he sent three new copies of his thesis to the new West Punjab University, Lahore through the Pakistan's ambassador in India. His patience and perseverance got rewarded when one fine morning he heard that the Ph.D. degree has been awarded to him, an announcement to this effect was made by Radio Pakistan, a number of times in its new bulletins.

Soon after he was appointed by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India to work on the project "Agriculture in Ancient India" He wrote a number of volumes on this topic. Next he was appointed Head of Department of Sanskrit, Kashmir University, later at Jammu University, and finally at the Vishveshvarnan Vedic Research Institute, Hoshiarpur. His thesis got published through this Institute.

After retirement he set up Sharda Peetha Research Institute at Karan Nagar. He worked untirengly and published every year a research journal, for which the Cultural Academy give him a little financial aid. The Editorial Board of this journal consisted of a number of persons but actually, he himself worked on it. Every year some scholar from India and abroad came to see him for literary guidance. He arranged a seminar on "Kanishka's a Fourth Buddhist Council at Kundalwana" in Kashmir. A few years before his demise, he translated into English the Sanskrit text of 'The Pratya Bhijyan', and when I visited him he proudly said, "I have bagged one more degree".

All along, I was very much impressed by his steadfastness in mission. Until the last moment of his life, his wife an elderly saintly lady stood by him like true partner. He was really a dedicated scholar and distinguished Indologist of our country.

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An Interview with Dina Nath Nadim

Prof. C. L. Sapru

(This interview was taken about a couple of years ago when Abhinandan granth was presented to Sh. Nadim)

C.L.S : Nadim Sahib, it is quite evident from your literary journey at every step you are influenced by communist ideology. But, at the same time you have emotional attachment with the rich traditions and cultural heritage of your motherland. How has the synthesis of these two been able to leave an impact on your thought?

NADIM: Regarding this question I would elucidate in this way that I was imbued by a deep sense of patriotism coupled with fellow-feeling from my childhood. When I grew up to boyhood I saw the grim realities of our socio-economic life where lots of people were have-nots and just a few haves. This inculcated in me a desire for the growth of the socialistic society which I was fortunately introduced to in 1947. Comrade Dhanvantri, a *compatriot* of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, was instrumental in owning me to Humanistic Marxism. Comrade Dhanvantri was a perfect soul with the deepest conviction in socialism.

As regards my cultural past, I was bequeathed this fervour from my childhood by my widowed mother who cronned the *vakhs* of Lalded and *Shalukhs* of Nund Reshi while I would go to sleep with her. The poetry of Krishna Das and Parmanand was my mainstay and then the whole host of pictures of our Gods and Goddesses was my sole inheritance. This gave me an insight into my cultural past.

C.L.S.: In your academic, political and the literary field who have been your source of inspiration to enrich your personality ?

NADIM : I was influenced by Rupert Brook, Swinburn. James Elroy Flecker and Wordsworth to some extent but I was stirred by going through *Subhai Vatan* of Chakbast. It moulded my thought process and made me a progressive poet. Alongside the epochmaking sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev and Ashfaqullah and many others, I was influenced by the terrorist activity. This was the time when Gandhiji and Pandit Nehru became the beaconlights of our day and they could magnetize my *ethos* in many ways. However I could not separate myself from the National Conference movement and in 1938 I became a part and parcel of this movement when the Muslim Conferences was converted into National Conference. I was imprisoned in Sept. 1938 for reciting three of my songs at the beginning of my public speech for I was taken into custody.

Shaheed Ki jo Maut hai
voh qoum ki hayat hai
Unke Rangile Khoon ne

"Kashmir Zinda kar diya" in Urdu poetry writing I was directly influenced by Josh Iqbal and Ehsan Danish. The latter came to Kashmir and aroused us from the *Stupor* of centuries.

C.L.S.: Basically you are a poet. But as a teacher also you have a distinguished place in the field of education. What was that incident which turned you to be a teacher ?

NADIM: Regarding my career as a teacher :-

I was influenced by introspective study of Lenin, Garibaldi, Mazzeni, Mayakovsky, Gorky and others whom I *studiously* and earnestly committed to memory. When I was a boy I used to teach students privately for my and my mother's livelihood and this induced me finally to take up the profession of a teacher in early 1940's. The very first year after having started Hindu High School, I started Lalded Memorial High School, Gandhi Memorial College and four other schools. I was *inducted* as a communist party member to join the Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh teachers federation and made a movement out of it. The whole state of J & K was covered by the movement. As a result I was elected by all teachers in 1957 to the state legislature. Inspite of stiff opposition from the ruling party, the two of us, myself and Sh. Ghulam Rasool Azad from Jammu were returned to Legislative Council. This made me a teacher which I am proud to be.

C.L.S.: When India got independence, Kashmir also came under a popular rule. You had a very bright future in the politics at that time. How is it that you chose to work on the cultural front only for the rebuilding of the nation ?

NADIM: In 1947 when India became free, we also achieved the freedom. Soon after something happened inside me, the pent up *anguish* and energy rushed forth in songs. The whole fabric of poetry was changed. There were slogans all around and I could not escape from them but I moulded the slogans in Kashmiri *diction* and enriched the whole period of '50's when a new language came into being. I became the standard-bearer of a new movement whose banner I hold even today.

C.L.S.: You have had a chance of visiting abroad twice—once as member of a goodwill mission to China in 1952 and second time in 1971 to U.S.S.R. as recipient of "Soviet Land Nehru Award". Please narrate some interesting events of your visit to these great countries ?

NADIM: There are many episodes of this travel to these two socialistic states. I shall quote only two which illustrate their behaviour:

1. I had a pair of *trousers*. It was threadbare by constant use. I threw it away in the hotel room where I was staying but it chased me to Tien Sien having been properly in minded and packed in my room. It again gave way and I threw it away once again but when I reached Nanking, it was

again there mended and pressed. I was *flabbergasted* to see it there. I managed to keep it under my fed clothes in the train on my way to Canton but when I reached Canton, it was again there. Having been *tortured* in this manner, I sticked a label to it with the instructions 'TORN & NOT TO BE RETURNED PLEASE".

2. In Soviet Union, I had a toothache in Minsk. In the night I applied *fomentation* to my swollen cheek but in the morning my guide was cross with me and I was dragged to the hospital. There I requested them to give me some anti-biotics "What Anti-biotics," "No antibiotics" "We shall pull the tooth out" and with a pair of *forceps* and without applying any local anesthesia, the doctors attending on me pulled the tooth out. This is like behaving a Comrade. I asked for some *paliatives*. They offered me a bottle of *cognac*. "This will do for a palliative"

C.L.S.: When you wrote operas or poems—folklore, birds, flowers and common man of Kashmir—all these inspired you throughout. But "VYETH" (VITASṬA) emotionally attracts you always. Is "Vyeth" the symbol of your life?

NADIM : Vyeth (Vitasta) is an opera like all others and not a musical feature and *it is* in reality my everlasting story. *I do not believe in death. I believe in life ; everlasting life and the belief has made me write the opera—vitasta.*"

21

Mahjoor : His Age and Poetry

G. N. Firaq

Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor was born in 1885 at Mitragam village in the middle of snow-capped mountains, sinuous rills and shady trees. At the time of his birth Kashmir was groaning under the age-old feudal rule unsympathetic towards the people. In the same picturesque village when Mahjoor passed away on April 9, 1952 the local government mourned his loss in a befitting manner. Mahjoor spent his childhood in country-side. No doubt, later as a "Shajra Kash" in which capacity he was posted at Hajan Kashmir in 1916, and as Patwari he saw other parts of the valley also which include the narrow and dirty lanes of Srinagar. He visited the undivided Punjab also where he met some important literary personalities including Bismil.

In his very childhood Mahjoor found himself of a literary turn and wrote verses in Persian and Urdu. These were the languages in which he was imparted education. He had therefore an opportunity to study the literature particularly of these two languages. With the passage of time he felt some urge within him to write verses not in Persian and Urdu, but in his mother tongue : Kashmiri. This urge was partly brought in him by his visit to the Punjab, and partly, by his reading public at home, particularly people of rural areas who could only be approached through their mother tongue. Thus in late twenties he finally decided to write in the language which was spoken by the people of his soil.

In the history of nations every period is epoch-making. Nevertheless, there comes a period in its life which becomes very important for the vital changes it brings into being. Mahjoor lived in one such period. It was the period in which Indians awakened enmasse, got organised and made foreigners feel that they are capable of governing themselves. Kashmir could not but feel the impact of this awakening. Here also new forces came into being and shook Kashmir terribly. The great uprising of 1931 was a part of it. So Mahjoor found around himself hopeful, revolutionary and optimistic people risen to change their destiny. The enthusiasm of the people thrilled Mahjoor with new hopes who, in its turn, became their mouthpiece and gave a form to the mute feelings in this way :

> O Nightingale !
> Though are crying from within the cage,
> None is here to set thee free,
> Muster courage
> Solve your difficulties yourself.

This verse and the poem to a Gardner, from which it has been taken, became the favourite poem of the people who, while singing it in public meetings, marched forward to reshape their future. This optimistic movement brought benign and life-invigorating change in almost all walks of life. Mahjoor associated himself closely with this movement. On the one hand he showed the mirror of past grandeur to it and, on the other, so that it leaps onwards, he raised the light house of new hopes. He wrote some poems of patriotic nature in one of which he, blamed of course gently, Rasul Mir, whose lineal successor he considered himself, to be, for praising the beauty of Gandhara and not Chandhara, a village near Pampore where Haba Khatoon, a famous literary personage and wife of the last ruler of Kashmir Yusouf Shah Chak had taken refuge. Most of these poems were recited and sung by people with delight. Among other things they laid stress on communal harmony, patriotism, social justice and peasant reform. Such verses were not written Kashmiri before. Though they lack poetry, yet their diction is new due to which quality they look appealing. In some of these poems Kashmir countryside in its spring comes to life, a fact which most of his predecessers had never taken note of. In some of these poems we learn something about the aesthetic taste of the poet. However Mahjoor did not feel satisfied in versifying political slogans alone and did not like to entangle himself always in problems of political nature. Basically a poet of love as he is, of which he sings confidently, Mahjoor likes to strike a new note in this field. His visions in this respect are iridescent. The result is his lyrical poetry which he had written in the beginning also. There is, however, a marked difference in the diction of earlier love lyrics and those which he wrote later. The language of later lyrics is sweet, pure and simple and very near to the spoken language. These are without doubt the valuable contributions to the language.

Mahjoor leaves upon Kashmiri poetry impressions of far-reaching consequences. After a long a time he gives new life and temperament to it. It becomes once more the poetry of the people of this world. It is mundane and secular in spirit. It becomes, among other things which include explanation and criticism of life, the poetry of the valuable personal experience of the poet. What qualifies it more is its power to give pleasure to the reader. No doubt he makes use of conventional forms, and unlike modern poets, never likes to make experiments in this field, yet in many respect he makes these look modern by the new context and diction. As an artist he disliked experiments of new forms and showed always in his readiness to write only in conventional forms. In 1950 he criticized modern young poets for writing free and blank-verse and for taking too much liberty with the language.

Mahjoor generally makes use of three forms : *Vachan*, *Ghazal* and *Kazam*. Vachan is a very popular form of a poem in Kashmiri, every stanza of which consists of four lines, the fourth line being always the refrain. In its lyricism it is very near to *ghazal* and *geet*. Ghazal was introduced in Kashmiri by Mahmood Gami and, among other poets, Mahjoor also wrote Ghazals of intrinsic value. In case one wishes to find out best of Mahjoor, he should read his Vachans and Ghazals. Needless to say that they represent the essence of Mahjoor. Here he employs with ease unusual but known imagery to give expression to what he goes through. They are generally the record of his shared experiences communicated faithfully. These two forms were the medium of expression of the predecessors of Mahjoor as well. However, when Mahjoor made them his vehicle, of expression, he finds them poor, weak and loose. After Rasul Mir, Shams, Faqir and Wahab there were some poets who are following beaten tracks and creating nothing. The outstanding poets of the language were imitated unsuccessfully. As a result of this Kashmiri Vachan and Ghazal had lost their life. They were in need of a poet who could give these new turn.

When judged against this background the importance of Mahjoor comes home to us. We feel about significance and the change which he brought in this field. The artistic capacities and variegated vision of Mahjoor gave once more new life to Kashmiri Vachan and Ghazal. They went into the hand of Mahjoor at a critical time, for he was more a believer in reform and less an adolescent revolutionary. He had besides an eye on Persian and Urdu Ghazal. As a result of it he did not turn his back against the tradition. It is a fact that in his formative years he followed Rasul Mir. He had also read at Hajan, a few months after the death of Wahab, a prolific poet, his unpublished Diwan somewhere in the second decade of this century. However, this formative period was very short. In the poetry of this period also we mark some originality and glimpses of mature Mahjoor. The language is simple and standard. It is the language spoken, not by the villagers, but by the people of a city. We find once again change in their content which is not of less importance. Much was in it about fate, repeated problems of mystic nature, social injustice and physical features of love. By passing all this Mahjoor introduced something new here. It was, by and large, what his mind felt at particular memorable moments about love and life. The fact is that poetry of Mahjoor went either into his Ghazals or his Vachans.

In his mature years he wrote poems all of which are not a part of his creative poetry. Some of these have now only historical importance. They are, of course, versified slogans of contemporary politics and problem poems. These include the Song of the Peasant. To the Security Council, War Song, The Hoe, To the Labourer and New Kashmir. However there are other poems also in which the poet has succeeded to preserve poetry. The Peasant Girl, The Freedom of 1947, Gulala, Sangarmalan are marked for their beauty and impression which they leave upon the reader. In them his language of a creative artist. The Freedom of 1947 is a powerful and biting satire on those who trampled down values and participated in the communal bloodshed. In the *Sangarmalan* he visualises new dawn, the harbinger of love amity and prosperity. What distinguishes it is the beauty of its imagery which is unique. The mistakes and selfishness of politicians are exposed ironically in *Gulala*. Prevailing evils are put in a question form to the tulip asked to answer if these evils also prevail in the world which he has come from. It is noted for its pathos and satire. In this field of Nazam, Mahjoor had no tradition behind him, worth mentioning. He has rather introducing it into Kashmiri literature for the first time in this way.

The poetry of Majhoor makes it clear beyond doubt that he was the representative of the age in which he lived. Some of his poems were sung by the people on the political platform and all of them, when put together, represent the conflict of the age in which he lived. No Kashmiri poet has ever enjoyed in the life time the popularity as Majhoor did. He was particular to see that his poems are sung by musicians all over the valley of Kashmir. To him the success of a poet depended upon the popularity which he enjoyed among the masses.

Lastly it looks proper to say something about the role which Majhoor played in popularizing Kashmiri language at a time when Urdu and English were the pet languages of the intellectuals and when the State Government felt no need to promote Kashmiri language.

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Lion in the Vale— **Sheikh Moh'd Abdullah**

(Sher-i-Kashmir)

Prof. G.M. Rabbani

I recall my childhood days which go back to the fifty-two years (I was then in 7th grade). A physical display of Schools was held in the S.P. High School Complex. Eminent personalities were present to witness the show. My eyes fell on a tall and thin figure wearing a Fez Cap and dressed in a European fashion leading the batch of students in display. I was told he is the only highly qualified Muslim in Kashmir whose name is Sheikh Moh'd Abdullah, a science teacher of present day M.P. Higher Secondary School, Srinager. None could predict he would one day change the destiny of his native land and awaken "dumb drive cattle" from deep slumber. Who could say he would be called Baba-e-Quom (Father of Nation) He is now Sher-i-Kashmir Quadi-Azam known by his people. This Sher (Lion) Sheikh Moh'd. Abdullah was born on December 5, 1905 at Soura.

On return from Aligarh he joined the Education Department as Science Teacher. His whole public life of 52 years is before my eyes. In 1930, he started his public life by organizing a study circle of educated youth in the interior of the city where they would discuss, debate and ponder over the sad state of affairs of the State under Dogra rule. I remember late Ashai, Registrar University played an important role in this circle when his services had been terminated by Dogra rulers.

His (Sher-i-Kashmir) imprisonment, his trial, and externment is a lesson book for us. His firm faith in God like a true Muslim is a beacon light. He stood four square against all storms. He is now a legend. He is a hero, great teacher, statesman, able administrator loved by the people from the depths of hearts, a votary of truth and non-violence. He was a spirit of man, the oneness of humanity universal brotherhood and love were his creed and ideology. Himself a perfect Muslim regular in prayer (Nimaz) he had great respect for all creeds and religions. When he started his movement even as a Muslim Conference President, he never allowed prejudice or hatred to cloud his thinking and ideology. His life is a "saga of heroism", suffering and dedication to the well-being of his Kashmiri Quom (nation). He is a 'colossus' in the history of Kashmir, who walked on the political stage brilliantly for more than a half century. He fought for freedom, justice communal harmony, secularism suffered incarnations and untold hardship in the Vale like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad in India. He was a living symbol of Hindu-Muslim Unity. Old, young small children would sing out loud and chant the clarion call "Hindu Muslim Sikh Itehad-Zindabad (Long Live Hindu Muslim Sikh Unity). We boys in teens then would sing in the streets the song most popular in his praise:

Deetun Nad Quomas Kairon Khufta Bedar
Bagamo Shahar Gov Ayan Sher-i-Kashmir

(He summoned the nation and awoke them from deep
sleep in the villages and cities Sher-i-Kashmir become famous)

His followers are called Sher (lion), nationalists to the core. They are believers of Secularism and Nationalism. In those days he had just secured Master's Degree in Chemistry from Aligarh Muslim University. He gave up teacher job, took a public life at a time when Hari Singh's autocratic rule was at its zenith and his administration was taken up by feudal bureaucrats. I recall on 14th of July, 1931, he was put behind bars along with his companions in the Dogra Army barracks of Badami Bagh, later on in Hari-Prabat Fort prison under the orders of Sutherland, Police Commissioner. His other companions in five small rooms of Fort prison were Mir Waiz Mohammad Yousuf Shah, Ch. Ghulam Abbas, Ghulam Nabi Gilkar (College Student), Moulvi Abdul Rehim (S/o late Moh'd. Abdullah Vakil), Mistry Mohd. Yakub, Qazi Gouhar Rehman of Jammu. They were released after some days. Their imprisonment paralyzed the life in Srinagar. Streets were deserted, Schools and College were closed. I remember 20 persons had been shot dead a day before, viz., 13th July. On 14th July five persons were killed. Reign of terror was let loose. The city of Srinagar, the towns (Anantnag, Baramulla, Sopore) were handed over to the Dogra Army and Spearmen on horses. Every passerby in the street had to say "Maharaja Bhadur ki jai" at gun point. Every one in the city had to stitch on his shoulder, symbol of Dogra flag indicating loyality to the dynasty.

Soon after Muslim Conference came into existence Sher-i-Kashmir was elected its President. It became a proper forum of the political activities of Kashmiris. People of all walks of life joined this organisation. There was now split in the Conference in late 1931 when Maharaja's Prime Minister, Raja Hari Krishen Kaul played his game of divide and rule. I remember brother fell upon a brother in the name of Sher-Bakra. With the passage of time, need was felt to convert the Muslim Conference into National Conference. These were the months of July-August, 1938. Sher-i-Kashmir once said, "After launching an agitation in July 1931, we experienced that not only Muslims but the vast majority belonging to other communities were also suffering equally. Only proteges of the Maharaja and people with vested interests were enjoying their lives in the entire State. Thus we converted the party into secular forum and named it National Conference". It is said when Jawaharlal Nehru was going to North West Frontier Province alongwith Frontier Gandhi-Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, he met Sher-i-Kashmir at Lahore Railway Station in company with Bakshi, Nehru advised him to broad-base the National conference and keep the doors of the organisation open to non-muslims. Many other well-educated, young men like Mirza Afzal Beg, who had just given up service in Accountant General's office, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, organiser. Mufti Jalal-ud-Din, Shyam Lal Saraf and others joined the movement. After his conversion to National Conference he went on to lead the secularists and nationalists of Kashmir, campaigned against Dogra autocratic rule and the oppression of his bureaucrats. His leadership placed a new programme reflecting the urges, aspirations of Kashmiris and a blue print 'Naya Kashmir' was drafted known as Magna Carta or great charter for Kashmiris. It envisages a new social order, better and a richer life irrespective of caste, colour or religion. This programme tells us the deep thinking and conviction of the leader. He gave a red flat with white plough. He was an unquestionable leader from the beginning commanding respect all around him. He had a charisma to draw crowds with him. He swayed the audience with his oratory. He had learnt at the portals of Aligarh University to start oration with the recitation of few 'Ayats' from his holy Quran with which he opened all his public speeches. At times most of the listeners in the audience swooped with emotion. He was respected and held in deep awe. He was a Kashmiri to the core of his heart and gave us sense of belongingness. He was attracted by Nehru in early forties. They came close to each other. It is said that Nehru was under Sheikh's spell. Within a few years Sher-i-Kashmir was elected President of All India State Peoples' Conference which had launched freedom struggle in princely States numbering about 566 States ruled by autocratic Maharajas and Nawabs.

A landmark in the State People's struggle was the Quit Kashmir' slogan given by Sher-i-Kashmir in early months of 1946 demanding repudiation of sale deed of Amritsar and denounced the Maharaja's right to rule, saying that 'Sovereignty resides in the people'. A century earlier imperialist Britishers had entered into treaty of Amritsar (March 16, 1846) with Gulab Singh Dogra ruler to whom Kashmir was sold on a paultry sum of 75 lakhs of rupees. (Nanak Shahee) Sher-i-Kashmir gave a clarion call to the people rise up in an organised and peaceful manner against the treaty and autocracy. It was a struggle, unique in the history of Kashmir. He launched it for the transfer of power to the people. Reign of terror was let loose within a few hours of the arrest of Sher-i-Kashmir, hundreds of workers were arrested all over the Valley. Srinagar became the 'city of dead". Dogra Army's harassment and repression on peaceful, innocent and unarmed Kashmiris was so great that my language is narrow and poor to express. At times we had to crawl before the Dogra Army personnel in the streets especially on road-crossings. This was indeed a do or die struggle. Sher-i-Kashmir was tried and sentenced to nine years imprisonment with a fine of Rs. 1,590.00. R.C. Kak, tyrannical Prime Minister got an opportunity to assume and wield unlimited authority in the State. He was at the helm of affairs under Maharaja. Shri Asaf Ali pleaded for Sher-i-Kashmir while Madhsudhan Kak, defended on behalf of Maharaja's Government. During his detention Sher-i-Kashmir was elected as President of State People's Conference. On hearing the pitiless repression, Pt. Nehru who was engaged in important talks with the Cabinet Mission members rushed to the aid of Kashmiris. He was arrested and lodged at Domel. The news of arrest shook the whole India, feeling its repercussions, Maulana Azad, the Congress President, called him back to Delhi for consultation.

In view of the situation, Gandhi Ji also visited Kashmir in July, 1947 which provided comfort to the harassed people. He was impressed with communal harmony that prevailed in the State. He said that it was very difficult for him to know whether Kashmir was predominantly Muslim or Hindu. Meanwhile, far-reaching developments were taking place in the country. The British Government had announced in the transfer of complete power to Indians. The partition of India was in the offing. On 14th August, 1947 Pakistan came into existence. On September 29, 1947 Sher-i-Kashmir was released unconditionally. R.C. Kak had been dismissed and there was an outburst of a spontaneous joy among the people who associated Kak with repressive regime. Unfortunately, country plunged into communal frenzy. On his release Sher-i-Kashmir was faced with the important question whether he should accede to India, Pakistan or remain independent. There was another question for him, namely the freedom of the people. Sher-i-Kashmir thought that this question could be decided only when free. Pakistani leaders did not pay heed to it and wanted to force the issue of accession speedily. Result was large scale invasion by Afridi tribesmen supported and abetted by Pakistan. Maharaja's Government had collapsed. He fled to Jammu leaving his subjects to their fate on 26th October, 1947. Sher-i-Kashmir flew to Delhi and vice versa to appeal to the to the Indian cabinet to despatch armed forces to help Kashmiris to repel invaders. Sher-i-Kashmir took himself the task of the defence of Srinagar against invasion. Thousands of volunteers from all communities offered their resistance to the invaders. A night vigil was kept for any tribesmen entering the city by stealth or any fifth columnist creating panic. Srinagar plunged into darkness. Invaders reached near the gates of Srinagar (Shalteng). Young men were given training at Goal Bagh (now Gandhi Park) and Sheikh Bagh P.W.D. grounds. Residents of Srinagar would collect daily at Lal Chowk to hear further developments. Hari Singh singed the instrument of Accession at Jammu. Indian troops were lifted by air. The raiders were driven out after 12 hours battle at Shalteng leaving behind 300 dead. Citizens heaved a sigh of relief. Before the arrival of Indian Army Sher-i-Kashmir summoned a public meeting at Partap Park Srinagar informing the citizens about the raiders destruction and loot and the aid that India is to give at this time of peril. During these critical hours volunteers went through the streets and lanes shouting Sher-i-Kashmir Ka Kiya Irshad Hindu Muslim Sikh Itihad. The Message was in time Muslim refugees from Jammu who had been attacked by Hindu communalists were pouring into the Valley through the Southern passes. For maintaining peace credit must be given to Kashmiri Muslims who showed tolerance, brotherhood under Sher-i-Kashmir's leadership. In the meanwhile on October 26, 1947 Dogra Maharaja revealed his intention of forming an interim Government headed by Sher-i-Kashmir S.M. Abdullah to the Government of India so that whole-hearted support of the masses represented by National Conference comes forth in order to repel invaders. Emergency Government was declared under Sher-i-Kashmir as Chief Emergency Officer which continued up to March 5, 1948 when the same administration was converted into a regular council of Minister with Sher-i-Kashmir as first popular Prime Minister. What were the landmarks of his first phase of administration ? I shall say the programme of social and agrarian reforms as envisaged in the Naya Kashmir had to be implemented. Big landed estates were abolished and a plan was prepared to transfer it to the tillers. The total area cultivated was about 22,00,000 acres which belonged to the Dogra rulers and his Jagirdars called Chakdars. The landlord was allowed to keep 160 kanals (20 acres) of agricultural land, 1 acre for vegetable gardening (1/2 acre) 4 kanals as residential site 10 kanals (1.25 acres) or orchards altogether 182 kanals (22.75 acres). It freed the peasant from the unbearable burden of complete economic dependence on the landlord. Also, the reforms in educational field were carried on by Sheikh Sahib. He took keen interest in educational reforms as he himself had been a teacher.

Meanwhile, Sher-i-Kashmir's speech at Ranbirsinghpora was not liked by the then Indian leadership and blamed him that he wanted to carve out 'Sheikhdom' of his own. He was misunderstood by the Indian Govt. His sole ambition was not to let Kashmiris be dominated by others, culturally and politically. Kashmiris must have their own individuality and identity. They should not be swamped by an outside culture. He believed since we have thrown our lot with India (limited accession), we must have a place in the sun. We cannot remain aloof. But unfortunately, Indian leadership could not fully understand him. A historian in India will record one day that he was believer in Secularism and he never faltered. He said "Hindus are my relatives because my ancestors were Hindus. If you harm them you are harming my relatives". He cooled and kept down hot heads among his party men. In 1948 Sher-i-Kashmir went to the United Nations to show to the world how Pakistan raiders had butchered their co-religionists in Kashmir and looted innocent people. His colleagues like Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, Late Saraf and G.M. Sadiq did not like his actions and speeches of Ranbirsinghpora. They felt aghast and toppled his Government. According to Dr. Karan Singh, D.P. Dhar played an important role in throwing out his Government. He was arrested on 9th August, 1953 and later on tried in the so-called Kashmir Conspiracy case, a fabricated one. The case was unconditionally withdrawn in 1964 (April) Sher-i-Kashmir was released after 13 years from jail. Nehru at first supported the State Government but later on lamened over his actions against him. He was invited to Delhi by Nehru and sent on goodwill mission to Pakistan which was cut short by untimely death of Nehru.

In 1965 Sheikh Sahib went on Haj pilgrimage and visited Egypt, U.K. and Algeria. He had a courtesy call on Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Chou-en-Lia who had also gone there at that time. His meeting with the Chinese leader created doubts in the minds of Indian leaders and they impounded his passport. As a result he was arrested and detained in Oatocamand and Kodia Kanal. He was released in January, 1968. Indian leaders began to realise that it was futile to cow-down Kashmir Lion.

Gradually, Indian leaders began to understood him. They began to realise that confrontation and conflict was not good in the larger interests of the country. They, therefore, initiated atmosphere of calm and cool understanding by bringing Sher-i-Kashmir in the mainstream. It was well motivated and he welcomed it and informed Mrs. Gandhi that he had no hesitation in making a fresh bid to restore proper understanding of the objectives for which he strove all through. The two leaders maintained their respective representatives. Mirza Afzal Beg and Shri G. Parthasarthy to conduct the dialogue that continued for more than two years resulting in the emergence of Kashmir Accord which established the basis of Centre-State relationship. Following this accord Sher-i-Kashmir was sworn in as Chief Minister on February 25, 1975. The Government under Sher-i-Kashmir introduced various far reaching reforms in administration, finance and education. A new era ushered in administration. It was a period of discipline and progress. Various agricultural and industrial schemes were introduced. Elections were held and Sher-i-Kashmir got an overwhelming majority defeating all the rival parties. Sher-i-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the peoples' hero, a great teacher, statesman, etc. passed away on Sept. 8, 1982 at 6.35 P.M., at Srinagar.

23

Of Saints and Shrines

Prof. K. L. Kalla

Saints, sages, seers and mystics have played a prominent role in different parts of the world, at different times from the remote past, for the good of mankind. By preaching practice of Truth, Goodness and Virtues they have tried to bring about the "Religion of Humanity" as was taught by Comte in the 19th century in Europe. Their message is known for Universality. In his book, "Mystics and Society", Dr. Sisir, K. Ghosh, the famous scholar, and Professor of Vishwa Bharati University, has made a good attempt to prove the important part that saints and mystics have played—and can play—for the good of all irrespective of caste, creed and colour.

While Dr. Radhakrishanan the great Indian philosopher pleaded in his book "Towards the recovery of Faith" the need of cultivating faith in this age of science and materialism. Paul Brunton pointed out in his "Search in Secret India" that in India there lived a class of renounced people called sadhus who possessed occult powers by which they could perform miracles. They could even transform the personality of a person who had lost the bearings of his mind. Credit must be given to Bikshu (previously Dewan) Chaman Lal for writing "Hindu America" which shows the Hindu origin and background of American culture. In "Eastern Religion and Western Thought", Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has again attempted to prove the importance of Eastern religion, without which the materialism of the West has become a source of evil, and beastliness. Dr. Bhagwan Dass, another reputed saint-philosopher of India, in his memorable book, "The Essential Unity of All Religions" has also indirectly pointed out the importance of saints and sages. According to the eminent Western Philosopher Bertrand Russell, "Man has no future" in this world on account of the destructive inventions of science. Such has also been the opinion of Aldou Huxely. In this world of uncertainty, chaos and confusion only Godly men and saints can show the people a way out of the enveloping gloom for survival.

These saints or Rishis were present in the East and also, the West. In the Middle Ages, saints in Europe lived in monastries. They shunned the worldly pleasures and pursuits and performed penances to atone for the sins of mankind—such a saint has been depicted by Keats the poet in his famous poem "The Eve of St. Agnes". They were also God-intoxicated. Among such saints mention may be made of St. Peter, St. Augustine etc. Religion flourished in Europe till the beginning of the eighteenth Century. Later on, with the advent of scientific revolution, rationalism and materialism were born. As a result people began, losing faith in God and religion. But credit goes to saints and mystics for keeping alive the message of religion.

In India no one can forget saints like Tulsi Das, Surdas, Tuka Ram.

Guru Nanak, Swami Ramkrishna, Vivekananda, Daya Nanda, Mehara Baba, Sai Baba, Satya Sai Baba, and Mahesh Yogi etc. "The Cultural Heritage of India" published by the Sahitya Academy may be consulted in order to know more about our saints, seers and sages. Their contribution towards the revitalization of our ancient culture is known to all. They have also reinterpreted our ancient scriptures to suit the needs of the present age.

Kashmir has rightly been called as Rishi Bumi, right from ancient times. The first Rishi Kashypa is said to have performed penances as a result of which the valley of Kashmir came into origin, by draining out the waters of Sati Sar. Saints of high order lived here before and after the advent of Buddhism. The fourth Buddhist Council was convoked here at Kundalwana by Kanishka in the last quarter of the first century A.D. Many Buddhist scholars from outside are said to have attended the deliberations.

Among the prominent Hindu saints of Kashmir mention may be made of : Lallesewari, Rupa Bhawani, Reshi Peer, Zaikak, Jeevan

Sahib, Mirza Kak, Atma Ram, Lassa Sahib, Aftab Koul, Anand Ji, Kailash Kaw, Ram Ji Zana Kak Tufchi, Prasad Joo, Sahib Chaudra Joo Baehru Sahib, Koul, Sham Sunder Koul, Manas Razdan, Mana Kak Goja, Kakaji, Kailash Kak, Trihgam Baba, Mathura Devi Grata Bab, Sumbli Baba, Widya Dhar, Mahyakak Malla, Shakti Chaitanya Bhagwan Gopi Nath Kasha Kak, Sona Kak (Nonar) Ramju Tabardar and Nand Lal Ji etc.

Saints like these formed a regular institution from the ancient times and they moulded the people and guided them along spiritual paths which brought them solace and peace of mind. But a large number of people went to them to seek fulfilment of mundane desires or to have calamities warded off. Now-a-days, saints of the above class are not found. But their memory lives from generation to generation and their message and sayings still keep the torch of spirituality burning. Afzal Khan of Emperor Akbar's court has recorded "The most respectable people of Kashmir are the Rishis who although do not allow themselves to be fettered by tradition are doubtless the true followers of God. They don't revile any other sect, ask nothing of any one and abstain from flesh. They keep off from Kanchan and Kamnay (lucre and sex). They showered affection for all preached and practised altruism and discouraged sectarianism".

All these were God-men as they played a notable part in raising the moral standard of people and in blazing the trail for God-realization in a peculiar manner suited to the times they lived in. "Their teaching, preaching and practices are in line with the basic principles of our holy scriptures. Their message is universal, free from dogmatism and sectarianism". In the present age of stark materialism—noted for crisis of character and loss of moral and ethical values leading to corruption. Selfishness and hypocrisy—the teaching of saints can not only serve as a remedy to these evils but also can bring about spiritual revival. Our youth, frustrated due to westernization, should attain inspiration from them as well as lose despondency. Under their influence, they would regain fresh hope for a bright future and a life of contentment by learning to develop a healthy attitude to life.

P.S. : Other saints are :

Shri Ramji Shalla, Jagan Nath Kaloo, Radha Krishen Khan, Saligram Braro and Rugh Nath Kokiloo.

24

Rupa Bhawani

Arthi Dhar

In the year 1621 was born a girl in the house of Madhav Dhar. He was a man of great integrity and faith and lived at Khankhah-i-Sokhta, Nawakadal. It was part of his daily routine to go to Hari Parbhat to offer prayers and one day while he was in deep meditation he had the vision of Goddess who asked him to ask for wish to be granted. He asked for a daughter who would have the power as in the vision. Thus was born Madhav Dhar's daughter who was named as Rupa Bhawani.

She was deeply religious. From her childhood she would accompany her father Hari Parbhat and whenever any saint would visit then she would listen to the discourses most attentively.

At a young age she was married to Hiranand Sapru. However her married life was a complete failure. On one hand was her numskulled husband and on the other hand was her cruel mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law accused her of going out at midnight and her husband too became suspicious. In reality every day at midnight she used to go to Hari Parbhat to offer prayer and returned home before dawn to complete the household chores. But her whole being was absorbed in God.

One day her parents sent her "kheer". The moment her mother-in-law started troubling her by saying that Madhav Dhar was a stingy fellow and how so could less a quantity suffice for her kinfolks. But holy Rupa not asked her not to lose temper and distribute it without looking into the vessel. So when she started distributed it once again it did not finish and she was so irritate and annoyed at this spectacle that she asked Rupa to distribute it herself. Rupa distributed it but it still it did not finish and her mother-in-law was exasperated to this. This added to her in-laws belief that she was some sort of a Soccress. Unfazed by these miracles of Rupa her mother-in-law continued to torture her. So Rupa renounced her mother-in-laws as well as her father's house and went to the distant hills for her meditation and in search of God.

Her first abode for meditation was Chashmi Sahiba wherein she remained for twelve and a half years. From here she left for a village Manigam. The people of Manjgam experienced a queer incident which led them to have complete faith in Alakeshwari. Daily the cattle belonging to the villagers of Manigam used to be sent to graze and a shepherd to look after them. It so happened that one of the cow's used to return milched so the shepherd was rebuked by the villagers but he pleaded helplessness. Inspite of his best efforts he could not find as to who milched the cow. So one day he followed the cow and to his utter surprise he found the cow going into a dense grove wherein near narrow opening lay a vessel and the cow remained standing over it and the vessel got filled with milk. He gazed inside and found a woman in deep meditation. He rushed back to the village and informed everyone of what he had seen. Accompanied by the village head Lal Chand, all the villagers went and there they saw a lady in deep meditation. Lal Chand then requested Alakeshwari to make his house her holy abode she warned him of the adversity that would befall him if she lived at his house. But he replied that her presence was more valuable than all the riches of the world. So the divine mother went with Lalchand to reside at his home. As had been told by Rupa he grew poor but this was only to test his faith for soon with her blessings he became prosperous again.

From Manigam Rupa Bhawani chose to reside at Vaskura a few miles away from Srinagar. One day a blind man came and prayed to her to grant him sight. She told him to dig a well and when water would appear in the well he would be able to see. He started digging the well and the moment water appeared he was able to see.

Fame of Rupa Bhawani spread far and wide. People would flock to pay obeisance to her. It was on the compulsion of her relatives and devotees that she returned to Srinagar. Here on 25th January 1721 Rupa Bhawani was found in eternal repose. Early morning on the same day her disciple Nand Ram who lived at Vaskura was asked by Bhawani to go to Safakadl and bring raisins and candy lumps. While going towards Safakadal he saw a funeral procession going. On enquiring he was told that it was of Alakeshwari. But he could not believe his ears and told them that he had been sent by Bhawani from Vaskura to fetch raisins and candy lumps. So the bier was laid down and on it lay the tuft of her golden hair and her head cover. This holy relic is still preserved at Vaskura. Every year her birthday as well as death anniversary are celebrated as "Sahib Saptam".

25

Mathradevi—Lalla Reborn

Sarwanand Koul (Premi, Kashmiri)

Mathradevi, the Lallishwari of 20th century Kashmir, attained Nirvaan at Verinag on January 5, 1985, at the age of 106 years. The author, a noted poet and writer of Kashmir, pays his tribute.

—Editor.

Over six hundred years back, Kashmir—the heaven on earth, the swarga the Orient-witnessed the spectacle of one its greatest saint-mystics, Lallishwari, spreading her spiritual fragrance all round. Known also as *Lalla Ded*, *Lalla Machi* and *Lalla*, she gave Kashmir and the world her immortal *Vakhs*, which have since remained ever fresh, and full of spiritual fervour Lalla's Vakhs are recited by thousands of Kashmiris with all devotion even now, the age of science and technology. In the country-side of Kashmir, even the cities and towns, no musical assembly starts without recitation of Lalla *Vakhs*.

Lalla was followed by Roopa Bhawani whose auspicious janamtithi, the Sahib Saptami, was celebrated about a fortnight back at Khanqahi Sokhta (Srinagar) with a Mahayagya and other religious programmes. Then came our mystic-saint-*tapaswani*, Mathra Devi, in the 19-20th century. The Devi threw off her mortal frame, after 106 years, at Verinag on January 5, 1985. An embodiment of *sadhna* and *tapasya*, Mathra was in many respects the Lalla reborn.

Born in the Kashmir Hindu family of Pandit Hari Koul at Verinag, the spot associated with Nilanag and his Nilamatapurana and mentioned as Vurnag in Rajatarangini. She was born on Shravana Shukla Ashtami, Samvat 1935, corresponding to 1878 A.D. It is said that Mathra was born near a cremation ground.

From her very childhood, Mathar, her pet family name, had a great love and earnestness for the search after truth. She grew with all love for Godly things, God's name and spiritual intimacy. She always demonstrated an unfamiliar and surprising attitude towards her home and the world around her.

She was married to Shri Bhagwan Dass Kandroo-Bhagalal-of Anantnag at the age of 14-15 years, but the marriage lasted about three years only when her husband passed away in his teens. A male child born to the couple also breathed his last before he was nine months old. Being young, healthy and beautiful, with all her fervour for the divine and the spiritual, Mathra returned to her parental home at Verinag. Here she practised her spiritual *sadhana* and *tapasya* along with her younger and only brother, Pandit Gobind Koul, who was also, like his sister, mad after search for God and Truth. It was at this stage of her life that God's grace was showered over her in the form of her spiritual Guru, Pandit Shridhar Joo Sharabi of Srinagar. The Guru guided his young disciple with all love, care and *bhakti*.

After some years, Mathra, with the help of her brother, Pandit Gobind Koul, who had by then become well known for his pious, religious and philanthropic life, constructed a *Kutiya* for her *tapasya* on the bank of *Vitasta* (Jhelum river with its source at Verinag) running close to her parental house. The *Kutiya* is still standing there. In the ground floor of the Kutiya, she got dug a pitch for her sadhana. It was from this pitch that Mathra emerged as Mathra Devi, after an unbroken tapasya for three years her face blazing with divine fervour, bright lustre and spiritual insight-lallishwari was reborn as Mathra Devi. Hundreds of people of all persuasions started thronging the Kutiya of Mathra Devi daily from the surrounding areas, even from far off Srinagar to experience peace and tranquility, which they got in sufficient measure by their mere proximity to the Devi.

Mathra Devi, however, could not be bound down by the atmosphere created by her halo in and around Verinag. She took it as an attachment and worldly *bandhan* in yet another form and was on the lookout for an opportunity to get free from it. The opportunity presented itself during 1940-41 when the holy festival of *Dashahar* at Shadipur in the northeast of the Valley was fast approaching. Starting for the *yatra* to Shadipur, she left her parental Verinag to which she was to return after 27 years in 1967.

From Shadipur, Mathra Devi came to Srinagar and made the Shivalya Temple, Chotta Bazar, her abode. The Shivalaya premises then was a desolate, barren, rough and unhealthy place. And it was this place which turned into a spiritual centre by the stay for some time there of the Devi. Looking back, it does not seem a mere coincidence that the same Shivalaya premises now houses an upcoming, attractive and charming spiritual complex the Rama Krishna Ashrama with a meditation hall, an auditorium, a library and a free health clininc in a neat and clean atmosphere. The adjacent Shiva Temple is also in a better shape now. May be Mathra Devi chose the then forsaken premises for her temporary abode about forty-five years with the idea of converting it into a lasting spot for meditation and peace.

It was from the Shivalaya complex at Srinagar that the Devi spread her spiritual message to thousands of devotees and others through her *upadeshas* and *vyakhyans* on topics like character-building, social reforms, and the thirst for Truth. It was here that she grew her *jattas* like that of Lallishwari. During this time her body became somewhat heavy, again like that of Lalla Ded, but attractive. It was while Mathra Devi was still gracing the Shivalaya that her most outstanding *vyakhyan* at Tickoo Bagh (Srinagar) caught the attention of Swami Shivaratnagiri of Durganag fame. Swamiji requested her to shift to Durganag where he arranged a separate Kutiya with some attendants for her.

The centre shifted to Durganag, where the Devi would bless hundreds of devotees daily. It became another Ashrama to which endless streams of people-high and low-men, women and children flocked daily to listen to the blessed and informed religious and spiritual discourses by the mystic-saint. Innumerable people bringing in simple and wholesome vegetarian eatables, cooking and preparing snacks, meals for one another. Such another self-serving Ashrama is now working at Gupt-Ganga (Ishabar) with Swami Lakshmajoo, the Saint-scholar at the centre thereof.

It was from Durganag that the Devi was taken back to Verinag by her brother, Pandit Gobind Koul, his son, Pandit Prithvi Nath Koul, and her disciples in 1967. It was Verinag again which the devi blessed for another seventeen years, till she became one with the One above on the *triyodashi* of Posha Shukla Pakhsha of Samvat 2041, corresponding to January 5, 1985. In between, Mathra Devi visited her late husband's place only once. Pandit Sahmboo Nath Kandroo, the only survivor of her husband's family, a very pious and *dharmic* gentleman, made her stay for 3-4 months and served her and devotees well.

Thousands of mourners, Hindus and Muslims alike joined the Devi's *arthi* amidst sky rending slogans of *Mathra Devi Amar Hai*, Mathra Deviki Jai, and else. The pyre was lit by Pandit Nath Kandroo, the only survivor on her husband's side, as per tradition.

26

Swami Nandlal—the Clairvoyant

J. N. Bhat

Swami Nandlal, who was endearingly and called Nandabab, strode the spiritual scene of Kashmir for well ever 50 years till he received Mukthi on October 30, 1973. Nandabad had acquired a clairvoyance which could not only read the present and the past, but could even predict events to come. To all appearances he behaved like a man out of his wits, quaintly dressed and muttering incoherently which made no sense for those uninitiated in his ways. But every word that he uttered was pregnant with deep meaning and was of great consequence for those who sought his blessings. If he chose he would believe the faithful who sought his protection from the mundane trials and tribulations that momentarily affect every individual and disturb his or her equilibrium.

GREAT SEER

Swami Nandlal was one in the line of great seers which the valley of Kashmir has produced over the centuries. Originally coming from village Nunar near Ganderbal, he early stayed in his house, although a new one was constructed for him by his devotees.

Whenever Nandabad lived, he would be mobbed by people of all faiths right from dawn to midnight to seek blessings. Even people from foreign lands would go to him. He would seldom talk directly to any person present in the audience. He would address one person whereas it was a reply to the unrevealed personal queries in the mind of another person also present there. He would talk in parables, similies paradoxes, metaphors; sometimes he laughed, sometimes sang, but generally he would be dictating something or the other to anyone present on chits or in a register kept for this purpose. The writings on these chits or in the register would usually be replies to the mental queries and problems of the different members of the audience or other matters of general public importance, but all these were in metaphorical language.

INDIFFERENT TO DIET

About his cleanness, Nandabab would be very particular he would bathe very morning, comb his hair and sometimes apply oils also. But he was totally indifferent to diet, which would generally be light. It did not matter whether you offered him varieties of meat or other dainty preparations or just one vegetable. He would take a little from the preparations presented to him, leaving the rest to be distributed amongst the audience. He usually had a small Katori with vermillion (Sindoor) which he would paste on the forehead of people present, irrespective of their faith or origin. But he would never offer any food from his Thali, or affix the holy mark on anybody whom he intuitively felt would not like it. Once a Muslim friend persuaded me to accompany him to the saint for getting something done through his miraculous powers. When the saint began to offer the left-overs from the food of his Thali to people assembled there, my friend whispered to me that he would not like to take it. Curiously enough, Nandabad did not call him at all to have one. On another occasion, another Muslim friend whom I carried to the saint to get a complicated problem of his solved (which was, of course, solved exactly on the data that Nandabad predicted) requested me that the Tilak may not be applied on his forehead. While asking all the members of the audience to get the holy mark affixed on their foreheads Nandabad did not call him.

In the hierarchy of Siddhis a stage comes when a spiritual aspirant gets a vision of the universe and through his mind's eye sees the past, present and even the future with perfect accuracy. At this stage, it is said that the spiritual aspirant is all powerful; he cannot only foresee things but can also mould the course of events. Accomplished saints seldom take recourse to this display of power.

According to them, Nature must have its own course and they would not interfere with the same, so much so that, even being all powerful, they themselves suffer from ordinary human ailments, diseases, etc. which they could easily get rid of.

SIDDHI

Nandabab also had passed that stage or Siddhi of spiritual evolution when a seer acquires the power of clairvoyance. He could enumerate problems and make prophesies—personal, social and political—with accurate precision. Suffice it to say that he could read the mind of people around his and understand their problems; sometimes offer solutions also. But he would take particular care of those whom he considered to be his main devotees or, in his own words, who were under his banner (Alam).

Nandabad could and did predict the rise and fall of various governments. As another mystic of Kashmir had told me, Nandabab was in the spiritual field 'the defence minister' of Kashmir with a whole host of other mystics, unknown and unidentifiable, working under him on different grades and posts. Later on, his jurisdiction extended to India also. I shall mention only two or three instances which, apparently unbelievable, are nonetheless true.

In 1965, when Pakistan invaded Kashmir, Nandabab was staying in the house of one of his disciples, the late Pt. Balkak Dhar. He started burning a huge fire and kept awake the whole night, sometimes weeping, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying. In the morning, I met him and he said that the previous night was the most difficult one for him. "They wanted to invade the airport", he said, "and I had to fight hard for changing their route". What transpired later was that actually Pakistani raiders had made all attempts during the previous night to capture the airfield but had failed. When a sabre-jet of Pakistan flew over Srinagar, he was performing a Havan; people felt panicky but he reprimanded them and assured that nothing would happen. When he was pressed further by queries he got a little irritated and said, "I have told you; should I give you in writing on a stamp paper?"

UNPREDICTABLE

Nandabad's movements would be unpredictable. He would leave his residence usually in a car or taxi (sometimes in a tonga also) and direct the driver to carry him to one place or the other. This trip would continue for days and cover various cities and stations. Once in Jammu he took a taxi for Delhi. On the way, the petrol tank of the taxi became dry and it stopped. Nandabab asked the driver why he had stopped the vehicle. The driver informed him that the taxi had run out of petrol. The reply was if he had any water, he should pour it into the petrol tank. The poor driver, more out of awe for the saint, poured water into the tank. The taxi started straightway. It reached Delhi without any petrol in its tank. This incident was narrated to me by the taxi driver himself.

From Delhi, Nandabab took a train to Bombay. There he directed his host to carry him to Santa Cruz Airport. When he reached the airport, a plane had taken off carrying Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, to some foreign country. A bomb scare was spread and the plane returned to the airport. Mrs. Gandhi took a different plane and continued her journey. Nandabab told his companions that he was very much worried till the plane took off and his task was over—nothing more nothing less. He returned to his headquarters and then back to Kashmir.

BASIC PRINCIPLE

All religions preach the same basic principle: that the ultimate goal is God or self-realisation. True saints have always had this universal approach. Nandabab also had the same universal approach; to him all the people, from any part of the world, were the same. He would show no preference for the high-ups nor would he treat common people with less consideration. He was always smiling and never in a pensive mood. He was living in a real world of omniscience and spiritual ecstasy which is far above the physical world, as Pt. Gopi Krishan has put it :

"The mystic gains a new power of perception which persists even in dream. In every state of being—eating, drinking, talking, working, laughing, walking or sleeping—he dwells in a rapturous world of light. He is always conscious of his luminous glow not only in his interior, but pervading the whole field of his vision during the hours of his wakefulness. He lives in a world of light and burning in his interior, filling him with a new lustre so beautiful and so ravishing. Light, both within and without, and a distinct music in his ears, are the two prominent features of his transformed being". In this state did live this Godman, Nandabab.

MULTIPLE PERSONALITY

Nandabab had a double or multiple personality. With his nearest disciples, his behaviour usually was that of a normal human being; he would talk about their personal matters, advice them on their family affairs and listen to them with patience and affection. But otherwise he would appear to be in his super-world, he would not reply straight to a question or a request. A distant relation of mine, a government servant, was involved in a criminal case. He came to me a number of times so that I would speak to the Subordinate Judicial Officer seized of the case. I was a Judge of the High Court then. I would not do it. One day when Nandabab was at my residence, the gentleman came and became a part of the audience. I narrated his problem to Babjee and added that though he (Bab) was kind to me, I had never asked him for anything personal. I craved his favour to help the man. No reply, I repeated the request a second time and third too, yet not a word in reply, nor did he care to look at the supplicant. But a fortnight late the accused was acquitted, much against all calculations and expectations.

But Nandabab was very particular that those whom he regarded as his own or, in his words, who were under his banner (Alam), should not take shelter under any other spiritual leader. He was jealous of them and would see that his flock remained intact. With all this, whole mankind was his family. In his madness there was a method, in his ramblings was deep philosophy, in his wanderings the discharge of his political responsibilities, in his reveries and prayers the solicitude of the needy, the diseased and his devotees. He was celestial, he was benevolent, he was magnanimous and above all he was universal.

NO TRUMPETERS

In this short article justice could not be done to the part played by this seer in the lives of all who approached him for solace. Details about his work, his youth, his profession, etc. are not available with me. It is for his devotees to collect the material for his biography for the benefit of posterity. He had no trumpeters as other saints or seers have had. He belonged to a small place which was generally cut off from the rest of the world till recently and, hence, he could not gain that publicity. In Gray's words, he was a "flower who was born to blush unseen waste his fragrance on the desert air".

27

Swami Vidyadhar : An Embodiment of Intense Sadhana

Om Prakash Kaul

Swami Vidyadhar was born on the 13th bright day of Ashad 1942 (Bik.) corresponding to 1886 A.D., in an orthodox Brahmin household of a Kanthdomayan (कंठधोमयम) 'Gotra'. His father, Shri Ganakak Razdan (Khonmushi) died when Vidhlal, the Swami's parental name, was only six. His mother, Harmali, was from a respectable Khushoo family of Malayar and an embodiment of the finest traditions of Indian womanhood. His elder brother, Shri Gopi Nath, entrusted his to the able care of Shri Madhav Joo Chander and Shri Rajkạk Ganz for being taught in the traditional Brahminic ritual. Later he obtained the degree of Visharad.

DEVOUT BEHAVIOUR

Right from his boyhood Vidyadhar astounded everyone by his sharp intellect and humility. He had a sharp memory and a resolute disposition. For his devout behaviour and ability, he was deeply loved by his teachers and others. At the age of 15, he was married to Shrimati Padmavati, the illustrious daughter of Shri Rishi Kak Kalu, a noble Brahmin.

There is no record how and when Vidyadhar surrendered himself at the feet his master, Yogiraj Rámji. Swami Rámji, the embodiment of all-pervading bliss, initiated and taught many of his disciples—chief among them being Swami Mahtab Kak, Swami Vidyadhar and Swami Govind Koul. The backdrop of this stream of Gurus is depicted thus in Shri Vidyadharastava(श्री विद्याधरस्तव).

श्री श्रीकण्ठादनुपम फला याहि सन्तान शाखा याता तस्यां
समधिगतवान् शैशवे शक्तिपातात्।
श्री रामाख्यं गुरुमऽथं च तत् सेवयाऽवाप्त धीर्यसतं
श्री विद्याधर गुरुवरं स्वात्मरामं नमामि।

Vidyadhar studied Shastras under his Guru and also received initiation into the mysteries of the 'Shaiva Sadhana'. Swami Ramji was a perfect Guru— a Strotri and Brahmnisht (श्रोत्रय और ब्रह्मनिष्ठ) It was the benevolence of the Lord Himself personified in Swami Ramji that guided the real Sadhkas like Vidyadhar. By and by Vidyadhar became adsorbed in his inner self and the only longing he had was to free himself from the mundane chorus of household activities. He attended his worldly jobs with more of a detached bent of mind. During this period, Vidyadhar lost his mother. He was only 28 and still a perfect Sadhaka. Gradually, he lost all taste for worldly life and he would remain aloof, confined mostly to a room in his house. Occasionally, however, he would teach scriptures to those who came to him.

Then came the turning point. In 1916, Swami Ramji shed his mortal frame. From now onwards, it became virtually impossible for Vidyadhar to remain confined to the four walls of his house. In 1919 came the breakthrough. He left his home and remained for some time at the holy place of Thajiwara—a hallowed place near Bijbehara. Thence, he went to the aloofness of Kamlavan (कमलावान) a solitary place near village Tral. An S.O.S. from his elder Gurubhai, Swami Mahtab Kak, unsettled his future plans. Swami Mahtab Kak, after the exit of his Guru, was in command of Shri Ram Shaiva Ashram. The Gurubhai asked him to return home apparently on the entreaties of his (Vidyadhar's) father-in-law. He would not spurn the directive of his Gurubhai.

WANDERING MONK

His stay at home did not, however, check the strong yearing for the life of a wandering monk. At times, the future care of his small children would flash through the ascetic Vidyadhar's otherwise serene mind. At the same time, the absolute 'Vairagya' would not let him reconcile to household life. This might have been the greatest period of turmoil in the Sadhaka's mind. At this juncture, an apparently small event clinched the great debate going on within the mind of Vidyadhar Jee. He, while teaching one of the Shalokas in 'Stutikusmanjali' of the great Bhaktà Shri Jagatdhar Bhatt to one of his pupils, pondered over it. It runs thus:

शान्ताकृतिर्द्धिजपतिर्विमल: कलङ्क-मुक्त: किलेति यदि
मूर्ध्नि विधुं विमर्षि।
एवं विद्योऽपि भवता कथमर्ङ्घिपीठ-प्रान्तेऽपि धर्तुमुचितो
न सगार्थितोऽहम् ॥

(Bhakta, in this Shaloka, entreats the Lord to allow him to stay at his feet even as he allowed and kept the pure and serene Chandrama on his forehead.)

All through the following night Vidyadhar Jee argued : "If Ashutosh Bhagwan gave Chandrama--the son of Oceans—a place on His forehead, He will surely give, at least, refuge to the family of this Bhakta".

Thus chanting "Shiv, Shiv" Vidyadhar Jee left his house never to enter to its portals again. This time also he reached Tral and from there wandered incognito. While on way to the forest of Karkotnag, he became the guest of Shri Prasad Joo, prominent Pandit of Village Sali, near the forest. Shri Prasad Joo advised him to desist from the adventure as the jungle was infested with beasts and reptiles. Vidyadhar Jee would not listen. He reached a spot in the dense forest and went straight into deep meditation.

CONTINUOUS SADHNA

One day, a Muslim Gujjar happened to find him. The Gujjar, enchanted by the Yogi's countenance, bowed in reverence and asked for permission to offer some food. After some persuasion Swamiji agreed. From the next day onwards the devout Gujjar used to get a 'pau' measure of milk for the Swami. To his great surprise, the Gujjar observed that his cows were giving him more milk now. The news reached the village and Shri Prasad Joo too. He rushed to the forest with his men, erected a small hermit's shed in the jungle and left some provisions there. Swamiji remained at this place in continuous Sadhana besmerged in supreme bliss. One day some Bhaktas from Srinagar, who happened to visit the place, were struck with awe and reverence to see a lion come during the night, make a round of the place and then gallop away with a big lash of his tail. People, thereafter, used to throng the place. Swamiji, therefore, left the place and went unnoticed to a forest in Guddar village. This forest is at the tip of Godawari Tirtha.

Almost up to 1947 the Swami roamed through the beautiful valley performing penance mostly in wild forests and quiet abodes of nature and occasionally visiting places of pilgrimage both within and outside Kashmir. He would also come on regular intervals to villages in the proximity of these places of penance and to Srinagar as well. He also performed Sadhana for various spells at the Amarnath Cave, Manzgam, Tulamula and Hardwar. Now and then would keep Maunvrat (मौनव्रत) extending over a year or so and live only on milk/ or one or two potatoes. Thus for 25 long years Swami Vidydhar would be content with a frugal meal-a-day.

STRAINS IN BODY

Around 1946-47, Swamiji's frame began to show some strains and as a result he would remain mostly at places like Tral and Srinagar. He could not, however, be bound to any one place. When at Srinagar he would generally remains at the house of his disciple. Shri Srikanth Raina, or proceed to Kheerbhawani where a small Kutia had been built for him by his Bhaktas. A small house at Chinkral Mohalla, Srinagar, which the disciples eventuality obtained, also served at the temporary Ashram where Swamiji would hold religious discourses.

Around 1947, a permanent Ashram was built for Swamiji at Karan Nagar—then a suburb of the city. From now on he would either stay at this Ashram or at Kheerbhawani and Tral.

It was 1950 when Swamiji came to Srinagar from Tral unexpectedly after a very brief stay there. When a Bhakta enquired about the reason of his coming to Srinagar to early Swamiji, in his usual playful mood, said euphematically that he did not like to see majority of his Srinagar disciples running agitatedly here and there. All laughed for it referred to the usual practice of Srinagar disciples going to villages where Swamiji would stay and entreating him to come over to Srinagar.

LAST DAYS

On Amavasi at about 10-30 a.m. Swami addressed three of his disciples present rather unexpectedly thus : "World is changing fast and Adharam (अधर्म) is growing. It is better that you people be of some help to these mortal remains". Then he asked one of his disciples to check up the 'Tithi' (तिथि) from the Panchang (पंचांग) while going to the bathroom down in the courtyard. When Swamiji came back the disciples informed about the 'Tithi' and 'Mahurat'. With a smile, the Swami said "All right" and wiped his hands and feet with a towel. A few moments later his body had a paralytic attack and, simultaneously, the outward sensations ceased. The body remained in this state for about two-and-a-half days amidst the continuous chanting of hymns by the great concourse of disciples and other people. On the third bright day of the Margshirsh at about 3 a.m. the numb body of Swamiji opened eyes at the conclusion of the *Bhairavstotra* of Swami Abhinavagupta. The eyes were full of tears.

The Bhaktas started the daily Aarti and at its conclusion mortal frame ceased to breathe. The revered Gurumata of the disciples, Smt. Padmavati, had also come there after 30 years of her seclusion and Sadhana and paid homage to her departing illustrious consort. In deference to the wishes of the Swami, expressed to some of his disciples, the last rites were observed without any fanfare.

Many are the anecdotes of Swami Vidyadhar's acts of benevolence and miracles to which even to this day many are eye-witness. To respect the sentiments of Swamiji's disciples not to write about any such miracles of their illustrious Guru, it would not be worthwhile to recall all the majesty of the Yogi both in his spiritual and social spheres.

COMPOSITIONS

Swamiji had great command over Sanskrit grammar and language and an astounding hold on Shastras. In his moments of intense Bhakti, he composed some devotional Sanskrit poems and many of these hymns are popular among the Kashmiris even to this day. The hymn to 'Rangaya Bhagwati' forms part and parcel of the 'Aarti' being recited at Kheerbhawani.

For his erudition he was called lovingly Vidyadhar and rightly so. Swamiji, throughout his life, remained an embodiment of intense Sadhana and complete detachment (अभ्यास व वैराग्य). Self-abnegation and an unflinching faith in himself were hall-marks of his illustrious life. Never in his life did he show any traces of exhibitionism ; in fact, he shunned all such extraneous propensities. He lived a simple ascetic's life. Never after renunciation did he touch money. He had absolutely left 'Kamini' and 'Kanchan' as Sri Ramkrishna Parmahamsa enjoins upon the travellers on spiritual path in his gospel.

The Swami knew no fear and showed great courage in going against the tradition in dealing with matters of suffering and injustice. It will be fit to recall some of the prominent incidents in his life which undoubtedly show his lofty disposition.

At the death of one of his sons, a relative came to Swamiji apparently to offer his condolences and in the process wept bitterly. Swamiji gave him sympathy and advised him not to grieve the inevitable.

Once when Swamiji was coming down the stairs of his Ashram of his usual 'Sandhya' (संध्योपासना) a thief loaded with articles stolen from the Ashram passed his way and even paid homage to him. In the morning when disciples informed him of the theft, he told them that a man loaded with the stolen articles had paid him respects in the early hours of the morning and he did not catch him then.

Among Kashmiri Pandits, there was a sub-caste called 'Leji Bhat' (ल्यजि भट्ट) who due to changing fortunes of the valley had got converted at some distant past and had reverted to their parent faith subsequently. Even though their lives were ideal, high-caste Brahmins would not even partake the meals prepared by them. Likewise was the situation for the Bohra sub-caste in the Pandit community. Swamiji could stand no such differentiation. He initiated fairly good number of disciples from among the subcastes and started a slow but sure propaganda against this high-handedness of the so-called top-class and orthodox Brahmins.

MENACE ELIMINATED

Finally, a big Yagya was got organised by the sub-caste at Bijbehara. Swamiji invited all the learned and orthodox Brahmins of the valley to the Yagya along with other leaders of the Pandit community. They could not spurn his offer. At the conclusion of the Yagya food was served by the brethren who had been wronged and everybody took the meals. Thus the menace to the integrity of the Pandit community was eliminated.

Swamiji was fond of music and often musicians, both Hindus and Muslims, used to recite rare Sufi and devotional poetry of great Sidhas like Parmanand and Lalleshwari to him. One among them was Swami's constant companion. Swamiji loved him like a child. But the musician married a Muslim girl and got alienated from his community. Some time later, the musician left the company of the girl and came to Swamiji after and period of self-imposed exile. While others despised him, the Swami received him with open arms. Nothing had changed the love of the Swami for his child.

PLAYFUL COUNTENANCE

That was Swami Vidyadhar, the great saint who would keep the audiences spellbound by his sweet voice and great discourses, opening new vistas of spiritual experiences for the Sadhakas whom he deftly guided in the spiritual path. This scribe, whose father was a disciple of Swamiji, had the great fortune of his constant company right from his early childhood to his early teens. He cherishes the playful countenance of the great Yogi for the Yogi seemed to be his playmate all the time he was in contact with him. He vividly recollects the mock horse which the Yogi would lovingly offer himself to be while the writer as a conscious Balak rode on his back.

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Swami Ramji—the Maha Maheswar Acharya

Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal'

In the middle of the 19th century A.D. there lived a Brahmin named Shukdev at Chinkral Mohalla, Srinagar. The Brahmin was a purohit and lived a pious life. Around 1892 A.D. (1910 Bikrami), a son was born to him. According to his horoscope, was predicted at his birth that the baby would grow to be a great saint. Nobody could imagine at that time the great spiritual heights that Swami Ramji would attain in his life later.

EARLY LIFE

The boy Ramji received instructions as Purohit; in those days modern education on Western lines was in its very infancy in this country. In his youth he came in contact with Shri Lala Joo Kokru, who was well-versed in Kashmir Shaivism through reflective heredity. Since Ramji also had a Spiritual bent of mind, to which heredity and environment again must have contributed, he took to the study of Shaiva philosophy under Shri Lala Joo. His intelligence and interest brought to him a clear comprehension of this school of philosophy. As the adage goes when you deserve, the desire in you gets fulfilled by itself. When you really need help, it must come.

Later, Ramji met his guru, Sri Manas Ram Monga (or Maneh Kak as he was called) who was a great mystic saint of the time in Kula system of Kashmir Shaivism. He had great spiritual attainments and wanted that philosophy to spread through a line of disciples. Being a Siddha Yogi and eager to transmit the knowledge to a capable person who understood this subtle philosophy, the master found the true disciple in Ramji and transmitted Yoga to him by his divine touch.

Ramji devoted himself to the practice of Yoga right earnest. He did not undergo the formal renunciation as a Vedantin usually does. He continued with his work of Purohit in a professional course and regularly attended Yajmans' houses for conducting worship and religious rites for quite some time of his early life.

NAVEH NARAN

Swami Ramji had a great devotee in Pandit Narayan Das Raina, a big merchant and houseboat owner of Srinagar at that time. In fact, Shri Narayan Das was the first to introduce houseboats in Kashmir. Among Kashmiris he was, therefore, known as 'Naveh Naran'. He was a man of high ideals. His simple habits, loving nature and cheerful behaviour had earned a name for him. Swami Ramji is said to have been his family priest. The family honoured Swamiji and all his requirements were met with pleasure by Sri Narayan Das.

Swami Ramji, with his comprehensive study of Kashmir Shaivism and severe practice of Yoga, got well established in the system. Now he wanted a secluded place. He found a congenial one at a fellow-disciple's home a Safakadal. When a flower is in full bloom, it gives out fragrance. Swami Ramji was now a Siddha Yogi. Discerning people who could recognize his worth came to him. Common people too thronged round him to invoke his blessings. This disturbed the family life of his fellow-disciple. Realizing this, Swami Ramji one evening called on his admirer and worthy Yajman, Sri Narayan Das, at Fatehkadal.

"Naran Joo ! I want to be in seclusion. Will you provide me with a place to live?", he told his trusted Yajman. The noble Pandit was simply pleased to welcome the sage and offered a small three-storeyed house, which he owned, just 300 meters from his residence. The second storey of the small house was furnished. In a few days

Swami Ramji moved to this room. Here he carried out his spiritual practice (Sadhana) and taught the Shaiva-Agama (Advaita Kashmir Shaivism popularly known as Trika philosophy) to worthy disciples like Swami Mahtab Kak, Swami Vidyadhar and Swami Govind Kaul who had been his personal devotees and received inspiration and his personal guidance to rise to their full stature in their time.

SCHOLARLY EXPOSITION

Many more devotees and admirers, mostly householders, were attracted towards him by scholarly expositions of the Agama and Yogic wonders. He was the greatest Yogi of his time in Kashmir. His mere look or touch was bound to make a person a changed one. He wielded a wonderful Shaktipata. Even Maharaja Pratap Singh, the then ruler of Kashmir and a discerning devotee, is said to have approached him for blessings. In his later years Swami Ramji is said to have sat, with knees to his breast, at his Asana (seat) and did not move out for 20 long years. Here the saint-philosopher imparted Yogic instructions to deserving disciples and delivered discourses on Trika philosophy for hours together to his listeners who were spell bound to see him immersed in undisturbed Smadhi.

शिष्यान् समुद्बोधयितुं स नित्य,
सदातनं स्वस्य शिवस्वभावम् ।
प्रादशद्दिहगतं समक्षं
होराश्चतस्त्रोऽधिगतः समाधिम् ।।

—रामेश्वर झा गुरुस्तुति

(To enlighten his own disciples he (Swami Ramji) openly displayed, even while in body, his own Shaivahood, by remaining in Samadhi continuously for four hours daily.)

Stories about his Siddhis are still current in the valley. The separate house where Swami Ramji lived is now the famous Shri Rama-Trika-Shaivashrama. Devotees and admirers are heard chanting devotional hymns and recitations from Shaiv-Agamas up to this time.

SHAIVASHRAM

Shri Narayan Das and his wife, Srimati Arnyamali, were greatly devoted to Swami Ramji, who from their family priest had now evolved to be their spiritual Guru. They had been serving him and looking to all his needs and convenience with great love and devotion. On May 9, 1907 (about 1964 Bikrami), the couple was blessed with a son. When the news of the birth of this baby was instantly conveyed to Swami Ramji, it is reported that he got up to dance and uttered :—

"I am Rama and the child be named Lakshmana."

ज्येष्ठोऽप्यसौ मद्गुरुजन्मजात-
हर्षोल्लासद्धिस्मृतदेहभाव: ।
रामोऽस्म्यहं लक्ष्मण एष जात
इत्येव गायन् सहसानर्नत ।।

(Even in his old age, Swami Ramji lost his body-consciousness out of divine joy at the auspicious birth of my Master (Shri Lakshman Joo), singing 'I am Rama and he (the new born) be named Lakshman' and danced in joy.)

DIVINE BEING

He believed that a divine being had taken birth in the form of the child. Truly so, the child, who was named Lakshman, showed signs of abnormality as he grew up. Swami Ramji encouraged the anxious parents and conferred blessings on this divine child. He had recognized divine features in the child who would often go into fits. Once when the parents approached Swami Ramji to express their anxiety about the child he sent them back with a remark. यि अमिस गछ़ान छुति गछ्यतन् म्य "...............What happens to him, may be graced unto me." Thus the child, Lakshman, entered boyhood under the spiritual care of this great sage, who later initiated him into Gayatri Mantra, Pranayama and certain Yogic practices.

श्रीमानभूद्राम इति प्रसिद्धो ।
यो मद्गुरो: कौलिकदैशिकेन्द्र: ।

(गुरुस्तुति:—रामेश्वर झा)

(There lived the renowned saint, His Holiness Swami Ramji, the Shaiva teacher of my Master—Swami Lakshman Joo.)

Knowing that he would not be in the mortal coil till the divine boy attained maturity, the sage entrusted his future initiation into the Shaiva order to his chief disciple, Swami Mahtab Kak.

कृत्यं विधेयस्य जनस्य शेषं
सप्ताव्दकल्पस्य च लक्ष्मणस्य।
शिष्यप्रधानं महताबकाकं निर्दिष्य
सोऽगान्निजधाम शैवम् ॥

(Entrusting his craving disciples and the seven-year-old Shri Lakshmana to the charge of Swami Mehtab Kak, his principal disciple, he (Swami Ramji) entered the real abode of Shiva by giving up his body.)

After a few years, Swami Ramji left the body in 1915 A.D. (1971 Bikrimi Magha Krishnapaksha Chaturdashi) to merge in the Divine Universal Self of which he had been an embodiment.

DIVINE RAPTURE

Swami Ramji was sometimes heard by his close disciples uttering in divine rapture his experiences of Supreme-Consciousness and here is given a verse (Shaloka) from his pen :—

मोहः शान्तो गुरुवरम्खान्मायतत्त्वोवलम्बाद्
मग्नं त्रेतः समरससमास्वादलोलं चिदब्धौ ।
भावव्रातः प्रशममगमन्निर्विकल्पे समाधौ ।
सिद्धाभासः स भवति हि मे कोऽपि संविद्धिकासः ।

(On accepting the Truth from the mouth of the Master, whose word is the sacred text, all my ignorance got dispelled. The mind (Chitta) dived deep in the ocean of consciousness eager to taste the loving nectar of equality. The web of thought calmed down in the state of unqualified meditation. Thus the Supreme-consciousness inexpressible is revealed to me in its perfectness.)

29

Kashmir History

(Important Events, Dates, and Men)

100 A.D. : Kings Kanishka, Harsha, Gonada Gopaditya, Khnikhika etc. ruled one after another. During their rule, Kanispura, and Gupkar were founded. The Famous Buddhist Council was held. Nagarjuna lived in Kashmir at Harwan.

500 A·D. : King Toramana ruled.

535 A.D. : King Tajina Hiranya ruled.

550 A.D. : King Mehar Kula ruled, Shaivism prevailed. The King inflicted cruelties on his subjects. Isesvara Lah Stumba, Khandana Vihara, at Pancha Sir was set up.

575 A.D. : King Pravarasena II ruled, Srinagar city was founded by him. He built Jayendra Vihara.

600 A.D. : King Lakhana Ranaditya ruled. He also built a Vihara.

625 A.D.: King Baladitya ruled. During his time Chinese traveller Heuin Tsang visited Kashmir.

650 A.D. : King Durlabha Vardhana ruled. He conquered Taxila, Rajouri and Poonch.

675 A.D. : King Lalitaditya ruled. Bhim Bhatta wrote 'Ravan

Arjuna”.

725 A.D. : King Lalitaditya ruled. He constructed the Martand temple. Chankun was his Minister. He led an expedition to Kangra and Kanauj.

750 A.D. : King Muktapida ruled. Vamana Bhata was a famous writer. He wrote “Kavya Alankara”. He founded the town of Parihas Pura. Buddhism and Hinduism flourished side by side.

776 A.D. King Jaya Pida ruled. Damodar Gupta wrote ‘Kultini Mata, He built Parihaspura temple. Onkongs visited Kashmir.

800 A.D. : King Lalitapida ruled Kashmir. Ksira Swami wrote his book on Lexicon. Pampur was founded as Letapura. He built Ushkar temple. Brahmins resorted to hunger strike.

850 A.D. : King Ajaitapida ruled. Kalata Ratnakar wrote ‘Spandavitti Naravijaya’.

875 A.D. : King Avantivaraman ruled. Siva Swami Utapaladeva wrote ‘Kappahan Abayu Daya, He founded Avantipur and built Avantipur temple. Internal consolidation Lakes place. Shura was the Minister of Commerce and Trade Engineer Suvya regulated the course of the turbulent river Vitesta and spanned it with bridges.

900 A.D. : King Sankarvarmàna ruled. Vallabhadeva wrote many books, the chief one being Pratya Bhajan. He wrote commentaries on Kalidas's works. The towns of Sopore and Pattan were founded. Pattan temple was constructed. An unsuccessful expedition to Western India was led which proved a great disaster. ‘Begar’ system was introduced.

925 A.D. : Queen Suganda Partha ruled. Indu Raja wrote, ‘Kavya Alankara Laghuorth.

950 A.D. : King Yaseskara Ksema Gupta Ruled. Abhinaya Gupta and Kayyata were famous writers.

975 A.D. : King Abimanyu ruled. Abhinav Gupta and Kshemenarara were famous writers, Bumazuva temple was built.

1000 A.D. : Queen Didda ruled. Somadeva wrote 'Katha Sarit Sagara'. The town of Diddamar was founded. Tunqas led an expedition to Rajouri. The noted writer Abhimanya Swami lived during this period. Prayag was built.

1025 A.D. : King Sangram Raja ruled. Mohd. Ghaznavi attemped invasion of Kashmir.

1050 A.D. : King Ananta ruled. Yogaraja wrote Parmartha Sara Gurese temple was built.

1075 A.D. : King Kalasa ruled. Bilhana was a famous writer. Kothar spring was built.

1100 A.D. : King Harasha Uchchala ruled. Ruyyaka was a famous writer. There was an uprising by Damaras. The period was marked by a famine which brought catastrophe for the people.

1125 A.D. : King Sussala ruled. Kalthana wrote 'Alankara Sarvasva' and the famous Rajatarangini. Feudal Lords were subjugated.

1150 A.D. : King Jayasimha Purmana ruled. Mankha Mammata was a famous writer.

1175 A.D. : King Jassaka ruled.

1200 A.D. : King Jagadeva ruled.

1225 A.D. : King Raja Deva ruled. Baldimar was founded.

1250 A.D.: Kings Sanqradeva, Ramadeva and Lachmandeva ruled in succession. Salar fort was built.

1275 A.D. : King Simhadeva ruled.

1305 A.D. : King Sahadeva ruled. Decay and decline of Hindu rule sets in. General Shah Mir and Renchan are taken in service. Khalsa raids take place.

1325 A.D. : King Renchan Shah ruled. Bulbul Lanker and

Khanqah were founded. Kotta Rani was his contemporary. Dulchis indulged in Plunder and massacre. Bulbul Shah introduced Islam.

1350 A.D. : Sultan Samus-Ud-Din ruled Jaggadar Bhatta was a famous writer. He was followed by Shah-Ud-Din, Lalla Ded (Africa) the prophetess of Kashmiri was a famous mystic saint and poet 'Vakyyani' is her famous work Shamuspora was founded. Jama Masjit was built. Mir Ali Hamdani came to Kashmir.

1375 A.D. : Sultan Qutab-ud-din ruled.

1400 A.D. : King Sikandar -(But-Shikan) ruled. He destroyed temple, imposed'Jajra on Hindus. Taimurlane invaded Delhi.

1425 A.D. : King Zain-Ul-Abidin ruled. Jonaraja the famous histroian and writer lived in his time. He wrote Rajatarangini II, Zainapura and Zaina Lank were founded. Badshah canal was constructed. Hindusim was partially restored. The art of paper machie was introduced.

1450 A.D. : In King Zain-ul-Abidin's time Mulla Admad was a Persian writer. Zaingir was founded Zainakadal and Razdhani were built. Shankaracharaya temple was repaired, Sanskrit and Persian books were introduced. Shri Bhat was a famous physician and Maulvi Kabir was a good teacher.

1475 A.D : King Hassan Shah ruled. Sul Kantha was a writer. Mir Shamsi Araqu preached 'Shiaism'.

1500 A.D. : King Mohammed Shah ruled. Sri Vara wrote Rajatarangini II, Babaris General attempted invasion of Kashmir.

1525 A.D. : King Fateh Shah and Mirza Haider ruled. Mirza Haider wrote Tarik Rashidi and Padyavati. Shias were persecuted during his rule.

1550 A.D. : King Yousuf Shah Chak ruled. Habba Khatoon was his wife. Some say she was his beloved he was a brave soldier and also a scholar. Emperor Akbar invited him to Delhi, and arrested him. Later, he was jailed and sent to a Bihar Prison, where he died. Kashmir was there-after captured by Mughals.

1586-1600 A.D.: Akbar ruled Kashmir through Governors, Prajyabatta wrote Rajatarjngini IV. A wall round Nagar (Modern Hari Parbat) was constructed. Hari Parbat fort was also built Raja Man Singh was Akbar's Commander who had captured Kashmir.

1625 A.D. : Jehangir ruled. Pather Masjid, Veri Nag Spring, Sevan Sarais and Shalimar Garden were built. There was peace and prosperity everywhere.

1650 A.D.: Shah Jehan ruled. Rupa Bhawani, the mystic saint, lived and propagated her philosophy. Mughal gardens Nishat, Chasma Shai and Nasim were laid. Pari Mahal was built for Dara Shikoh, Jama Masjid was repaired. Saffa Kadal was built. Rishi Pir also lived during this period. Haider Malik wrote. The History of Kashmir.

1675-1700 A.D.: Aurangzeb ruled. The famous writers during this period were-Gani, Dara Shikoh, Ratna Kantha Narayan Koul. They wrote, Dewan Gani, Upani Khata, Kusumanjali Tika, and History of Kashmir, respectively, Mulla Shah Mosque was built, Hazrat Bal Gardens were laid.

1725-1750 A.D.: Governors under later Mughals ruled. The Pathan rule commenced. This was the darkest period of Kashmir history.

1775 A.D. : Timur Khan Durrani ruled Kashmir. There were floods and fire. Hidus were treated mercilessly. Shias were also persecuted. Bimber and Akhnoor were annexed. Amira Kadal was built at Srinagar. New Taxes were levied.

1800 A.D. : King Zaman Shah Durrani ruled Sivopadvaya wrote, 'Vijnana Bhairav' Sona Lanka was built.

1825 A.D. : Kings Mohd. Shah and Shuja-ul-Malik and Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled, one after another Dewan Nandram was appointed Governor of Kabul. Kohinoor passed to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In 1819 A.D. Sikh army invaded Kashmir, under Birbal Dhar. The first Sikh Governor was Diwan Moti Ram after the defeat of Mohammad Azam Khan.

1850 A.D. : Dogra rule commenced. Maharaja Ghulab Singh ruled. Mohd. Gami and Bhawanidas Kachroo write Books in Kashmir and History of Kashmir respectively.

1875 A.D. : Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled, Poet Parmanand wrote. Poems and Songs' in Kashmiri. Gadadhari temple was built at the premises of Amira Kadal Palace. A peaceful era commenced. Research was encouraged. Hassan wrote History of Kashmir.

1900 A.D. : Maharaja Partap Singh ruled, Famous writers of this period were ; poet Krishna Das, Maqbool Shah Kralwari (who wrote 'Gulrez'), Abdul Rashid Nazim and Rasul Mir Shahabadi, both poets means of Modern communication and also Education were introduced.

1925-1947 A.D.: Maharaja Hari Sing ruled. Famous writers of this era were : Pirzada Ghulam Ahmad 'Mahjoor (Poet) Abdul Ahad Azad and Master Zinda Koul. Palaces were constructed. Hospitals were built. In 1931, a popular revolt broke out against the feudal ruler and a political party called National Conference was set up and organised for the emancipation of the people of the State. The Slogan of 'Quit Kashmir' was raised in 1946. Kashmir acceded to India in 1947 and the tribal invasion of the State took place in the month of October, 1947. Popular rule was established the same year under (late) Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah as Prime Minister. A Constituent Assembly was convened for drawing a Constitution for the State. In 1950, the 'Cultural Front' was organised under Mr. G.M. Sadiq, to revive Kashmir's traditioinal culture 'Kong Posh' was its official organ.

1953 A.D. : Political events took a turn and Sheikh Mohd. Abdulla was arrested and Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. took over as Prime Minister. He stepped down under the Kamraj Plan and was followed by Shams-Ud-Din, the theft of the 'Holi Relic' of Prophet Mohammad tookplace at Dargah Shrine. Both Hindus and Muslims performed penances and took up action for its early recovery. Finally, Mr. G.M. Sadiq took over as the Chief Minister. After the death of Mr. G.M. Sadiq, Sayyid Mir Qasim took over as Chief Minister. There was an accord between Mr. Sheikh Mohd. Abdulla and the Cental Government. Under this Sheikh Abdulla was re-appointed as Chief Minister and he formed the ministry. Law and order were restored, Student agitations came to an end.

A Vigilance Department was set up to fight and curb corruption. Plans for the beautification of the Srinagar city were chalked out, pay scales of Government employees were raised. After the demise of Sher-I-Kashmir, Sheikh Mohd. Abdulla his son Dr. Farooq Abdullah took over as Chief Minister. The subsequent events are of common knowledge to the readers.

Soon after 1947, when popular Government came into being the Cultural Academy of the J&K State was, set up. Under its patronage, writers have started blooming and creative art and literature are floурshing. Now Kashmir has its own University, and serveral Insitutions of Higher learning, such as the Engineering College, Agricultural College, Medical College, Sher-I-Kashmir Post Gruduate Medical Institute at Soura. Radio and T.V. Stations, Cultural Centres like Tagore Hall, Sports Stadiium, Sher-i-

Kashmir Indoor Games Stadium and others. The State has also set up a number of Industrial undertakings like a Watch Factory (HMT) at Zainakot and Cement Factory at Wauyan (Khrew), Several other industrial units are in the process of coming up. In fact Kashmir has taken strides to modern progress.

Sher-i-Kashmir, Jenab Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah passed on Sept. 8, 1982, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, his son took over the reigns of administration as Chief Minister. But, on account of defections Shah Ministry came into being on July 2, 1984. As law and order situation deteriorated, curfew was clamped on the city off and on. So, Governor's Rule under section 92 of the State Constitution was imposed on the J&K State, on March 7, 1988.

The Governor's Rule was followed by the signing of Rajiv-Farooq Accord on Nov. 7, 1986. The aim was to root out poverty from the State. Eversince, the State has been marching forward on the road of progress in the economic and developmental fields.

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स्वर्गीय केशव भट्ट ज्योतिषी

क्रिशण लाल कल्ला

पण्डित केशव भट्ट ज्योतिषी के देहान्त से जो हानि पवित्र कश्मीर भूमि के संस्कृत साहित्य तथा ज्योतिष शास्त्र को हुई, उसका ध्यान में लाना भी असम्भव है । इसमें कोई सन्देह नहीं कि आपके शरीर-पात से कर्म-काण्ड का सबसे बड़ा कर्मिष्ठ ब्राह्मण हमारी मातृ-भूमि से चल बसा ।

आपका जन्म २५ भादों विक्रमीय संवत् १९४९ को श्रीनगर के सुंदर सरोवर डल के समीप रैणावारी में हुआ । आपके पूज्य पिता श्री प्रसाद भट्ट भी उच्च कोटि के ज्यातिषाचार्य थे । उनकी नक्षत्र-पत्रिका शुद्ध और विस्तृत मानी जाती थी । उनकी विद्वता के प्रशंसक श्री महाराजा प्रताप सिंह भी थे । वार्षिक पंचांग का बनाना और गणित के आधार पर फलादेश का देखना इस कुल का पैतृक व्यवसाय रहा है । शास्त्रार्थ तथा गणित की गूढ़ समस्याओं पर वाद-विवाद करना इन श्रेष्ठ ब्राह्मणों का दैनिक कार्य-क्रम रहा है । ऐसे ही पवित्र और शास्त्रज्ञ वातवारण में केशव भट्ट का जन्म हुआ और उचित समय पर उनकी शिक्षा का प्रबन्ध किया गया ।

बचपन से ही आपने धर्म-शास्त्र की ओर ध्यान दिया और ज्योतिष के साहित्य का अध्ययन किया । अतः इस वेद-प्रेमी ब्राह्मण का लगभग सारा यौवन वेदों और ज्योतिष शास्त्र अध्ययन तथा कर्म-काण्ड सम्बन्धी क्रियाओं के करने में व्यग्र रहा।

प्राज्ञ तथा विशारद की परीक्षाओं में उतीर्ण होने के पश्चात् आप एक पाठशाला के अध्यापक नियुक्त हुए । इस पदवी पर काम करते हुए आपने साहित्य तथा धर्म का प्रशंसनीय रूप में प्रचार किया ।

समय के बीतने के साथ-साथ वेदांत शास्त्र के प्रति आपकी चेष्टा विकसित्त होती चली गई । आप वास्तव में पूर्ण ओर सच्चे वेदान्ती थे और आप इसके बिना जीवन को व्यर्थ समझते थे । आपके सिद्धान्त तथा निश्चय उन तथाकथित वेदान्तियों के बिल्कुल भिन्न थे जो कर्म तथा परिश्रम से जी चुराते हैं । आपके विचार में जीवन का ध्येय केवल कर्म ही है और मनुष्य जीवन का कर्त्तव्य भी यही है । वैसे तो काम, क्रोध आदि मनुष्य के छ: स्वाभाविक शत्रु हैं किंतु आप सदा इनमें से केवल अहंकार पर विजय पाने की बात पर ही जोर देते रहे । आपने जीवन भर व्यवहारिक रूप में इस बात को दिखाया कि आप सदा अहंकार से बचे रहे । कहना न होगा कि ऐसा करने से शेष स्वाभाविक शत्रुओं का आप पर तनिक भी प्रभाव न पड़ता था और ऐसे ही जीवन पथ पर चलने के लिए आप लोगों को शिक्षा देते थे । आपने कभी भी निष्क्रिय न रहकर व्यवहारिक रूप में 'उद्यमों भैरव:' जैसे शिष-सूत्रों की सार्थकता को सिद्ध किया ।

यह बात देखकर कि कर्म-काण्ड शास्त्र का पठन-पाठन और व्यवहारिक रूप में प्रयोग दिन-प्रतिदिन लुप्त होता जा रहा है आपके हृदय को दु:ख हुआ । आपने इस बात का प्रतिकार करने का दृढ़ निश्चय किया । आप से पहले इस बात की ओर किसी भी मनुष्य का ध्यान नहीं गया था । आपने एक संस्कृत प्रेस की नींव डाली और बहुत से कर्म-काण्ड, धर्म-शास्त्र, ज्योतिष आदि विषयों की उन पुस्तकों को छपाकर प्रकाशित किया जो उस समय तक नहीं छपी थी । यह पुसतकें आजकल सर्व-साधारण को सस्ते दामों पर उपलब्ध होती हैं । यह अमूल्य काम करके आपने जनता का वह उपकार किया जिस के लिए उसे बहुत ही आभारी रहना चाहिए। आपके सफल परिश्रम से जहाँ जनता को उन पुस्तकों से लाभ होता है वहाँ यह पुस्तकें भी सुरक्षित हो गई हैं। इन ग्रंथों की सूची इस लेख के अन्त में दी गई है ।

आप कद के छोटे थे और आपका शरीर हृष्ट-पुष्ट था, कन्धे विशाल, और भुजाएं लम्बी थीं, नेत्रों से तेज टपकता था, मुख-मंडल अत्यन्त उज्जवल, गंभीर और प्रभावशाली था । आप स्वभाव से ही अत्यन्त प्रतिभाशाली थे और सरस्वती आपके कण्ठ और जीह्वाग्र पर सदा उपस्थित रहती थी । लेखक ने कई बार अपनी

आंखों से देखा है कि आप ऐसी निपुणता से भिन्न भिन्न विषयों पर वाद-विवाद में भाग लेते थे कि आपके प्रतिद्वन्द्वियों को भी आपकी योग्यता का लोहा मानना पड़ता था । आप साधारणतया परिश्रम के देव थे । चरणों में पूला और सिर पर प्रणाकार पग धारे हुए शरीर पर केवल एक सामान्य पट का फिरन पहने फिरते रहते थे । संक्षेप में कहा जाय तो ऐसे आत्रेय-गोत्र मुनि को देखकर देखने वाला मन ही मन श्रद्धा के फूल अर्पित करता था ।

पवित्र काशी के शास्त्र तथा धर्म के भास्कर स्वामी ईशवर दास जी आपके आध्यात्मिक गुरु बन गये । उन से ही आपको गुरु मंत्र मिला और उनके उपदेशानुसार आप महागायत्री के उपासक बन गये । आपने कई पुरुषचरण किये और चांद्रायण व्रत धारण किया । यह धर्म-क्रियाएं और व्रत जिस शास्त्रनुकूलता और सफलता से आपने निभाये वह सारे देश में अनुपम हैं ।

तड़के उठकर प्रतिदिन स्नान-संध्या के पश्चात् आप पूजा में लग जाते थे और महागायत्री की स्वर्ण मूर्ति का स्नान अश्रुधारा से कर देते थे । देहान्त तक यही आपका नित्य-नियम रहा । केवल तीन चार घंटे निद्रा को समर्पित करके आपका शेष सारा समय क्रियाशीलता में ही बीतता था । कश्मीर की रमणीय वाटिका में ऐसे ब्रह्मार्षि विरले ही होंगे जिन्होंने अहंकार और स्वार्थ-सिद्धि की भावना को पूर्ण रूप में त्याग दिया हो। ऐसे ही साधारण और परिश्रमी तथा प्रकाण्ड पण्डित हमें वसिष्ठ और लौधाक्ष जैसे ब्रह्मर्षियों का स्मरण कराते हैं ।

आपका विचार था कि मनुष्य जीवन की सादगी चिरकाल तक स्थिर नहीं रह सकती और समय समय पर इसमें ऐसी कठिनाइयां आ जाती हैं जिन पर सुगमता से विजय प्राप्त नहीं की जा सकती, अत: जीवन कभी सुखमय नहीं रह सकता क्योंकि साधारणता और सादगी ही सुख के पात्र हैं ।

कश्मीर के सुप्रसिद्ध संत मन्यगाम-निवासी श्री कष्य काक मल्ला ने श्री केश्व भट्ट के देहान्त से कुछ दिन पहले विक्रमीय (संवत् १९५० जेठ ३०) एक नुनर-निवासी भक्त जन से कहा था कि उसके कुल में एक बालक उत्पन्न होगा जिसकी जीवन लीला केवल एक मास में समाप्त होगी । उन्होंने स्पष्ट रूप में यह भी कहा था कि केशव भट्ट के देहान्त के पश्चात् नुनर में जन्म लेकर एक मास पश्चात् अपनी ज़ीवन-लीला समाप्त करेंगे । यह समाचार श्री केशव भट्ट को देहान्त से पहले मिला और उन्होंने जलमय नेत्रों से श्रद्धा के फूल संत कश्य काक के श्री चरणों में समर्पित

किये । आश्चर्य की बात है कि सचमुच नुनर ग्राम के उसी ब्राह्मण-कुल में एक बालक का जन्म हुआ और केवल एक मास बीतने पर वह परमधाम को चला गया । इसी प्रकार केशव भट्ट् नामक जीवात्मा का कर्म-फल समाप्त हुआ और वह इस आवागमन से सदा के लिए मुक्त हो गए ।

इन्होंने जो ग्रन्थ प्रकाशित किए हैं उनकी सूची नीचे दी जाती है :-

१. नित्यकर्मविधि नं. १
२. नित्यकर्मविधि नं. २
३. नित्यकर्मविधि नं. ३
४. शिपूजा
५. गणेशस्त्तत्रोवली
६. सौन्दर्यलहरी
७. देवी पूजा
८. चामुन वाक्यं
९. रुद्र पंचकम्
१०. कर्म काण्ड पुस्तक नं. १
११. कर्म काण्ड पुस्तक नं. २
१२. कर्म काण्ड पुस्तक नं. ३
१३. कर्म काण्ड पुस्तक नं. ४
१४. वेदकल्पद्धम:
१५. मेखला पुस्तकं
१६. वटुक पूजा
१७. पार्थिचेधर पूजा
१८. उपदेशपंचकं
१९. योगवासिष्ठसार:
२०. भक्ति विवेकसार:
२१. भवानीनाम सहस्त्र स्तुति:
२२. विष्णु सहस्त्रनाम स्तोत्रम्
२३. राज्ञी ज्वाला-शरिका सहस्त्रनाम स्त्रोतम्
२४. आदित्य हृदयम्
२५. कुलशस्थापनो द्वार:
२६. शिवसूर्ययो: सहसस्त्रनामावली
२७. काश्मीरिक ज्योति संग्रह:
२८. बृहत्स्तोत्र रत्नकार नं. १
२९. बृहत्स्तोत्ररत्नकार नं. २
३०. सहस्त्रनामावली
३१. शिवपूजा

31

स्वामी परमानन्द की हिन्दी कविता

एम० एल० बाबू

भक्त कवि परमानन्द जी काश्मीर की उन महार्नविभूतियों में गिने जाते हैं जिन्होंने समय समय पर अवतरित हो कर यहाँ के साहित्य, यहाँ की कला को बल देकर उसे आगे बढ़ने की गति प्रदान की । १६ वीं शताब्दी के इस भक्त कवि ने भी लल्लेश्वरी रुपभवानी, शेरव नूरूद्दीन, शाहकलन्दर, तथा अन्य भक्त कवियों की भांति तत्कालीन साहित्य को एक नया बल, एक नई गति प्रदान करके बड़े अभाव की पूर्ति की।

परमानन्द जी से पूर्व के भक्त कवियों ने हिन्दू मुस्लिम एकता पर बल दे कर जिस एक नई मिली जुली संस्कृति को जन्म दिया, जो एक स्वस्थ वातावरण की सृष्टि की थी, उसी स्वस्थ आध्यात्मिक एवं साहित्यक परम्परा में स्वामी परमानन्द जी का जन्म हुआ था, अतः स्पष्ट है कि परमानन्द जी में भक्ति के बीज बचपन से ही मौजूद थे । अल्पायु से ही उनके अन्दर ईश्वर के प्रति झुकाव था आरम्भ में वे अपने ही गाँव में सरस्वती की उपासना करते थे और बाद में अपने गाँव के पास ही एक पहाड़ी पर स्थित "भर्ग शिखा" के मन्दिर में दुर्गा की उपासना करने लगे । उन्होंने शिव और शक्ति की उपासना भी की है । लेकिन इस तथ्य के बावजूद भी, कि उन्होंने अपनी पूजा के फूल सभी देवी देवताओं को अर्पित किये

हैं, उनके ईष्ट भगवान् कृष्ण ही रहे हैं। उन्होंने अपना सब कुछ उन्हीं के चरणों में अर्पित किया था । अतः वे कश्मीर की कृष्ण भक्ति शाखा के सर्वोपरि तथा प्रवर्त्तक कवि माने जाते हैं । कृष्ण के प्रति उनकी अनन्य भक्ति, उनके उत्कट प्रेम को देखकर, उनकी कृष्ण सम्बन्धी कविताओं को देखकर ऐसा लगता है कि वे श्री वल्लभाचार्य मध्वाचार्य, चैतन्य महाप्रभु के निकट हैं । और यह कहने में भी कोई संकोच नहीं होना चाहिए कि वे कृष्ण भक्त कवि सूरदास, मीराबाई, चण्डीदास तथा विद्यापति के वर्ग के कवि हैं । इसके अतिरिक्त स्वामी परमानन्द जी एक उच्च कोटि के साधक भी थे, अपनी इसी साधना के बल पर उन्होंने योग की उच्च अवस्थाओं का ज्ञान प्राप्त किया था, इसका परिचय उनकी रचनाओं से मिलता है।

स्वामी परमानन्दजी पहले ऐसे काश्मीरी कवि हैं जिन्होंने हिन्दी मे़ कविता की, हम देखते हैं कि परमानन्दजी के समय यहाँ की राजनीतिक परिस्थितियों में काफी परिवर्तन हुआ था, पठानों का शासन समाप्त हो गया था, सिख और धर्मप्रिय डोगर प्रशासकों ने हिन्दुओं के लिए एक ऐसे स्वतन्त्र वातावरण की सृष्टि की थी जिस में रह कर हिन्दू अपना धार्मिक जीवन स्वतन्त्रता के साथ बिता सकते थे। दूसरी बात भारत के अन्य भागों से काफी संख्या में धर्मप्रिय यात्री, साधु सन्त कश्मीर के प्रमुख तीर्थों की यात्रा करने के लिए आते थे — इन तीर्थ स्थानों में भी प्रमुख तीर्थ स्थान श्री अमरनाथ जी की यात्रा के लिए और भी अधिक संख्या में लोग आते थे, मटनग्राम (जहाँ के परमानन्द निवासी थे) अमरनाथ जी के मार्ग में पड़ता है—यहाँ गर्मियों के मौसम में साधुओं का काफी बड़ा तांता लगा रहता है। धर्मप्रिय भक्त शिरोमणि परमानन्दजी इन साधुओं, सन्तों के सम्पर्क में आये। उनहोंने उनके साथ वेदान्त पर चर्चा, श्रीमद् भागवत का पाठ, कीर्तन आदि अनेक प्रकार के कार्यक्रम आयोजित किये । इस से फल यह हुआ कि स्वामी परमानन्दजी हिन्दी के भक्तकवियों की कृतियों से अवगत हुए । उन्होनें उन कृतियों का अध्ययन और मनन किया, इसे यह बात स्वतः स्पष्ट होती है कि भक्ति का जो व्यापक प्रभाव उन पर पड़ा है, वह इन्हीं भक्तिपूर्ण कृतियों के कारण । इन्हीं दिनों मटन-गाँव में स्वामी आत्मानन्दजी नाम के एक संन्यासी रहा करते थे जो एक उच्च कोटि के विद्वान और योगी थे। स्वामी परमानन्द ने इनके सम्पर्क में रहकर वेदान्त-दर्शन का गहन और गम्भीर अध्ययन किया । इस के साथ-साथ उन्होंने संस्कृत भाषा का भी अच्छा ज्ञान प्राप्त किया । इसी से उनकी कविता में संस्कृत शब्दों का बाहुल्य देखा जा सकता है। कही-कहीं तत्सम शब्द भी काफी संख्या में मिलते हैं ।

इसके अतिरिक्त स्वामी परमानन्द पर कुछ मुसलमान सन्तों का भी प्रभाव रहा है । इस बात का प्रमाण उनकी कविता में फारसी शब्दों की भरमार है । स्वामी परमानन्द ने एक सिख साधु के सम्पर्क में रहकर 'गुरुग्रन्थ साहिब' का अध्ययन भी किया था । इस कारण उनकी कविता पर पंजाबी भाषा का प्रभाव भी स्पष्ट दिखाई देता है । उदाहरण के लिए :-

मन कंसा तन मथुरा होंदा,
कृष्ण आत्मा हृदि गोकुल रहंदा,
नांरद विवेक सब सनियां देंदा ।।

जिस में होंदा रहंदा देदा पंजाबी शब्द हैं । उन्होंने ग्रन्थ साहिब की इन पंक्तियों क—'इक लख पूत सवा लख नाती, ते रावण घर दिवा न पाती' । एक हिन्दी कविता में इस प्रकार व्यक्त किया है : —

'इक लख पूत, सवा लख नाते,
जिस रावण घर दिवा न बाती,
क्या फल पाया कसासुर ने ।।'

इसके अतिरिक्त उनकी कविताओं में 'मुड' त्रिजतातांदा 'आरव' 'सदके' आदि पंजाबी शब्द भी मिलते हैं ।

स्वामी परमाननद जी ने भजन, गीत एवं अन्य फुटकर कविताएँ लिखी हैं, मास्टर जिन्दालाल जी कौल ने उनकी कविताओं का यों विभाजन किया है :

१. देवी, गणेश, शिव, विष्णु आदि की स्तुति में गाए गए विनय के पद—जिन में उन्होंने अपने किये पापों का वर्णन, और उनके लिए क्षमा की याचना की है ।
२. अमरनाथ जी की यात्रा सम्बन्धी कविताएँ जिन में योग सम्बन्धी बातों पर प्रकाश डाला है ।
३. इस भाग में उनकी तीन लम्बी कविताएँ आती है :—

(क) सुदामा चरित्र (ख) राधस्वयंवर (ग) शिवलग्न ।।

इन कविताओं में उन्होंने श्री कृष्ण के प्रति अगाध प्रेम, राधा तथा गोपियों का कृष्ण के प्रति प्रेम, शिव तथा उमा के मिलन का वर्णन किया है । कुछ कविताओं

में जीवात्मा का परमात्मा के प्रति प्रेम और आकर्षण भी दिखाया है ।

इसके अतिरिक्त उन्होनें कुछ कविताएँ ऐसी लिखी हैं जिन में ज्ञान प्राप्ति के लिए कुछ आवश्यक साधनाओं का उल्लेख किया है और कुछ वेदान्त पर आधारित रहस्यपूर्ण कविताएँ भी हैं ।।

इसकी लिखी हुई हिन्दी कविताएँ एक दर्जन के लगभग ही उपलब्ध हैं और यद्यपि संख्या की दृष्टि से ये कम अवश्य ही लगती हैं लेकिन साहित्यक और राष्ट्रभाषा की दृष्टि से इनका काफी महत्व है । इन कविताओं की उपयोगिता, विभिन्न प्रदेशों के पारस्परिक सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान की दृष्टि से भी सिद्ध होती है । काव्य-शास्त्र की कसौटी पर भले ही खरी न उतरती हों लेकिन उनकी उपयोगिता प्रभाव की दृष्टि से प्रशंसनीय है। श्रीकृष्ण का जन्म हुआ है और भगवान् शंकर ने उन का दर्शन करने के लिए योगी का रूप धारण किया है । अतः भिक्षा प्राप्ति का स्वाँग रचकर वे गोकुल में पधारे हैं। इसका चित्रण कवि ने बड़े ही अनुपम ढंग से किया है :—

भिख्या मांगन सांग बनायो, आयो सदाशिव गोकुल में ।
दर्शन करने का ध्यान धरायो, आयो सदाशिव गोकुल में ।।

हाथ में त्रिशूला कान में मुद्रा, सुन्दर मुख को करा कराल ।
घंटा शब्द और शंख बजायो, आयो सदाशिव गोकुल में
गल में नागेन्द्र हारा पल में, जल में जैसे उढी तरंग,

गोकुल में भूकम्प मचायो—आयो सदाशिव गोकुल में ।।

यशोदा ने यह देखा तो भयभीत होकर कृष्ण को आँचल तले छिपा लिया, अन्तर्यामी शिव ने इस बात को समझ लिया :—

अन्तर्यामी स्वामी देखा, अन्तर बाहर पूर्णमय, बालकृष्ण का मुख उसने छिपायो, आयो सदाशिव ...... इस तरह यशोदा ने श्रीकृष्ण को घर में छिपा लिया और स्वयं अन्न की मुट्ठी भर का 'योगेश्वर शिव' के पास जाती है, इस का वर्णन परमानन्द जी ने यों किया है :—

ले कर दाना मुड आयो जसोदा, वसुदेव का वासुदेव न साथ ।
सामने होके हाथ जुडायों, आयो सदाशिव गोकुल में ।।

इतना ही नहीं, यशोदा यह नहीं जानती कि उसके घर में स्वयं ईश्वर ने अवतार लिया है । इसका वर्णन परमानन्द जी ने बड़े ही सुन्दर ढंग से किया है, वे लिखते हैं :—

> यह बालक हे जसोदामाई, त्रिजगतांदा स्वामी है ।
> ना वेदि आख सके न्ना भाषा, व्यास पराशर शुक—
> देव महमा जिसका की हमको दिखातो—आयो
> सदा शिव................................

हिन्दी में गोपियों का श्रीकृष्ण के प्रति अगाध प्रेम, भक्ति तथा उसके विरह-वर्णन की एक परम्परा रही है। इस परम्परा का निर्वाह परमानन्द जी ने भी किया है। उन्होंने भी गोपियों के विरह-वर्णन और उसकी प्रेमभक्ति का बड़ा ही मनोहारी वर्णन किया है। उनकी ऐसी कविताओं में एक और विशेषता यह भी है कि उन्होंने इन कविताओं में वेदान्त की अद्वैतभावना को भी समझने का प्रयास किया है । देखिए:—

> 'ना तुम देखो कृष्ण श्यामा, पतिया हमारा लूको।
> बाजीगर ने बाजीगरी की जिगर हमारा पारा लूको।।'
> हना कहूँ तो मर जाऊँगा ।
> रिस के नसना, उस को हंसाना, चोरों का अलंकारा लूको।'

इसी तरह एक और 'लीला' में गोपियाँ अपनी बात को यों व्यक्त करती हैं :—

> 'सदके उस को बुलाओ, सदके सदके ।
> क्या आना तदके, मर जाना जदके ।।'

चारों वेदों का अर्थ यही है :—

> जप, तप, यम और बरत यही ।
> छोड़ो कपाला अपना सदगुरु पद के ।।
> तुम हो वो राजा तुम कों आ जा मीटे,
> कम करने से कम काजा मीटे,
> क्यों घट में रहना घट वद के ।।

अपनी एक कविता में श्रीकृष्ण के अवतार लेने के कारण को स्पष्ट करते हुए स्वामी परमानन्द जी ने वृषभानु के द्वारा पूछे गए प्रश्न का उत्तर नारद जी से इस प्रकार दिलाया है :—

जग में कृष्ण किस कारण आयो रे—
मग्न रहा बैठा परमात्मा—
बीच अपने कुछ भी नहीं जाना, अपने आप को देखन आयो रे ।।
चित्त आभास का बाधा होके,
कृष्ण आप ही आप राधा होके,
फिर गई माया, ना मोहन आयो रे ।
'परमानन्द' विषयानन्द होके, मस्त रहे हस हस के रोके,
आप अलेप आप लेपन आयो रे ।।
'परमानन्द' परम आनन्द होके, अनाहद वाद योग नाद बिन्दु होके ।।
नित मुक्त होके नित बन्ध होके, जग में कृष्ण इस कारण आयो रे।।

स्वामी परमानन्द जी भक्तिपूर्ण कविताओं का अध्ययन करने से यह बात स्पष्ट दिखाई देती है कि उनकी कविताओं में जो अद्‌भुत काव्य-सौंदर्य की सृष्टि हुई है वह उनकी सूक्ष्म दृष्टि और तीव्र प्रतिभा के कारण हुई है। जिन कविताओं में उन्होंने रहस्यवादी-कवियों की तरह प्रतीकों के माध्यम से वेदान्त के अन्य आध्यात्मिक उपदेश दिये हैं, वे बहुत ही सुन्दर और उच्च कोटि के कहे जा सकते हैं । अपनी कुछ कविताओं में उन्होंने वास्तव में मोह और अज्ञान की निद्रा में सोये पड़े मनुष्य को जगाने का प्रयास किया है, उदाहरण के लिए देखिए :—

श्यामा मुख सन्मुख दिखावे मेरा मन कैसा सुख पावे ।
इन्द्रिय नगर का राजा इन्द्र होवे, मोह लंका का रामचन्द्र होवे ।।
कुम्भकरण करने का जगावे, देह द्वारका मन है कृष्ण जी ।
भोग इच्छा अठ पटरानी, वख वख लख बिछावे ।।

सृष्टि में कोई भी चीज स्थाई नहीं, यह केवल दो चार दिनों का मेला होता है। माँ, बाप, भाई, बन्धु सब मिथ्या और भ्रम हैं । वास्तव में मनुष्य अकेला ही आता है और अकेला ही जाता है । परमानन्द जी लिखते है :—

'रहने क्या ना रहने का वेला, है क्या यह एक दो दिन का मेला
आयो अकेला, फिर आयो अकेला ।

स्वामी परमानन्द जी की भक्ति का मुख्य आधार कृष्ण ही रहे हैं । उसके रंग में इन्होंने अपने को रंग डाला था, जब-जब वह भावावेश होकर, कृष्ण के प्रति अपनी पूजा के फूल अर्पित करते थे तो उस समय उन्हें चारों ओर उनकी (कृष्ण

की) ही दिव्य अलौकिक मूर्ति दिखाई देती थी, उनकी ऐसी ही एक कविता के अंश यों हैं—

‘रूप तुम्हारा अच्छा पछाना, तुम बिन कुछ नहीं काम
गोकुल में श्री कृष्ण हुआ हो, अयोध्या में श्री राम ।।
वैरी तेरे कोई न होवे, प्यारे तेरे और ।
हिंसा, कंसा, मारा तारा, प्रेम ने सुदामा ।
वृन्दावन में रास रचायो, नाम पयो गोपाल ।
भोगी हो सब भोगां भोगे, योगी हो निष्काम ।

उनकी अद्वैतभावना का एक सुन्दर उदाहरण भी देखिए :-

बाप हमारा कृष्ण हुआ हो, पिता तुम्हारा नन्द,
आपस में पहुँचोगा तुम, आप करो दर दाम ।

अर्थात् : आप मेरे पिता हैं,- (परमानन्द जी के पिता का नाम कृष्ण पण्डित था) और आप के पिता का नाम नन्द है, (परमानन्द जी का वास्तविक नाम नन्दराम ही था) दोनों का आपसी सम्बन्ध क्या है--इस को आप ही स्पष्ट कीजिए ।

Appendix
Kashmiri Literature and Litterateurs

Kashmir, or 'Kashir' has been known as the seat of learning—Sharda Peetha in ancient times. It is a veritable heaven on earth, the Switzerland of Asia, Lalla Rookh, etc. The natural beauty of mountains, fresh lakes and rivers inspired ancient Rishis and Savants to propound Shaiva Philosophy, and produce immortal works, like--Nilamatapurana and Rajatarangini books on eroticism (Kuntinimata) acetheticism and rhetoric.

Up to the end of the Hindu era, Sanskrit was the spoken language, or the written language. But with the advent of Islam in the 14th century, Arabic, Persian influenced the Sanskrit, and by and by, the Kashmiri language was born. Unfortunately, this language is without script and grammar. Kashmiri literature developed from 1947 onwards under the patronage of the Academy of Arts, Culture.

According to (late) J. L. Kilam "Separated from the rest of India by inaccessible mountain barriers, Kashmir in course of time, developed herself into a miniature world for its people. Here, lived from times immemorial a portion of the Arya race. Kashmir evolved her own music, sculpture, architecture and painting. In the realm of philosophy, she propounded the SHAIVA PHILOSOPHY—She coined her own script, called SHARADA. Sanskrit reached its high watermark in ancient Kashmir, and so did Sanskrit Poetry."

Sanskrit was replaced, by and by, with Kashmiri PRAKRIT, but much of this literature is now quite lost. With the establishment of Muslim rule; Sanskrit was replaced by Persian, and, strange to say, many Kashmiris wrote excellent poetry in this language. There took place a bifurcation of Kashmiri into two sub-dialects. The Hindu writers drew upon Sanskrit words, phrases, similies and metaphors; and the Muslims made a copious use of Persian in their writings.

Upto the end of the Hindu rule in the 13th century, three languages, Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Kashmiri were in vogue as media of verbal and written expression. MAHARTHA MANJRI by Maheshwarananda (Gorakhnath) a work of monistic aspect of SAIVA philosophy is written in the PRAKRIT language.

In the 11th century, Acharya Abhinava Gupta has quoted in his TANTRALOKA and PARATRISHIKA VIVARNG many verses and prose passages from PRAKRIT and APBHRAMSHA. In the 13th century, Shatikantha wrote MAHANAYA PRAKASHA which contains an old specimen of Kashmiri Prakrit. In the 14th century, Lalleshwari's WAKYAS and Nund Rishi's SHRUKS (Slokas) are written in the Kashmiri language.

There are a number of inscriptions found in different parts of the Valley in SHARADA script of Sanskrit language upto the 13th century. One of them still exists in a small shrine, named BHAWANESHAWARI between Harishwar and Khonomoh. This indicates Zain-Ul-Abidin's time (1423–1475).

Lalleshwari appeared on the literary horizon of Kashmir more than a hundred years after Shanti Kantha died. She poured forth her heart rich in spiritual and mystic experiences in Kashmiri verse. Her language is more familiar to us than that of Shanti Kantha". In her VAKYAS, she narrates her own spiritual experiences. She found the "Truthful One" in her own home/self, and not in pilgrimages to holy places, or in the observance of rituals.

Kashmir witnessed political and spiritual upheaval in the 14th and 15th centuries. During this period Taimur, scared away from Central Asia, a number of Sayyids who settled in Kashmir. Their beliefs had been tempered by the doctrines of the Sufi cult and were noted for Catholicity—In Kashmir they propàgated Islam. Their contact with Kashmir saints and savants gave rise to an ecclectic school of thought saturated with mysticism.

In 1377 A.D. Sheik Nur-Ud-Din (NUND RISHI, or SAHAZANUND) was born at this time, and he was nurutured in such a spiritual atmosphere. Later, he conveyed his mystic experiences in hundreds of couplets, or SHRUKS (SLOKAS).

There are some poets" who have left for us LOVE-LYRICS of a very high order. They have experienced emotions in colourful language. One such poetess was Habba Khatun, the queen of King Yussuf Shah Chak. He was invited to Delhi by Akbar as a royal guest, but, later on, he was imprisoned and sent to Patna Jail where he died. Habba Khatun felt greatly the pangs of separation from her beloved husband, and she poured forth her heart in a large number of lyrics.

After Habba Khatun another Pandit lady, named Arnimal sang lyrics in the 18th century. She was forsaken by her husband, Munshi Bhawani Das Kachroo, a Persian scholar and a prilific writer during the Afgan rule in Kashmir, besides being a courtier. This desertion inspired her to sing sad songs.

There bloomed forth a crop of poets in the 19th century whose contirbution to Kashmiri Literature is considerable. These are Mahmood Gami, Rasul Mir, Wahab Khar and Parmanand, Wahab Khar tried to grasp the unity that underlies the subjective and the objective Universe, Rasul Mir was a poet of action, while Wahab Khar believes in the inevitability of change.

Parmanand represents the LILA group of poets whose'forte' is the composition in praise of the LILA (play) of Lord Krishna, the personal God. In these poems there is greater abandon and joy than is to be found any other Kashmiri poetry. These are primarily devotional poems, full of religious mysticism. The universe is real and good and all Creation is an overflowing of God's joy, a LILA or SHIVA's dance. Far from believing in asceticism and aloofness from the world, these poets stress inward experience rather than mere formalism, and prefer 'bhoga' to 'tyaga' or enjoyment to renunciation. Many of them belong to the Kashmiri TRIKA SAIVITE tradition. Some of the noteworthy poems of Parmanand are three long narrative poems—RADHA SVAYAMVARA, SUDAMA CHARITA and SIVA LAGNA. The language is terse but mystical.

Another famous poet of the Lila group is Krishna Razdan of wanpoh (Anantnag). His poetry reveals a whole-hearted abandon and light heartedness as well as a keen sense of the enjoyment of good things of this world." These songs are free from obscure mystical allusions and are melodious.

There is little of prose, but folk tales and fairy tales are numerous, all these are anonymous. However Shangi Ganay of Shahbad wrote a love romance about LILA and RUSTUM. There are fairy tales, like WAZIRMAL and LALMAL romantic tales like SHAHSAVAR; tales of clever highwaymen, like Shashman, Thug. These tales are notwritten, but existed in oral tradition. Rev. T.S. Wade translated the Bible. Isvara Kaul produce KASHMIRI SARDAMRITA, a grammar of the language. Rev. H. Knowles made a collection of Kashmiri proverbs, which throw light on the customs and character of the people, wit and wisdom.

Parmanand died in 1880, and Mehur (Ghulam Ahmed) emerged in the early 1920's Wahab Parray died in 1913, while Maharaja Pratap Singh died in 1925, By and by cultivation of Persian and the old traditional learning were assailed by Urdu and English writers.

Another period of the literary History of Kashmir was ushered in by G.A. Mehjoor. During this period, Kashmir also felt the impact of new ideas surging through India. His poetry abounds in love, melody of the earlier LOL-LYRICS of the 16th and 17th centuries, and also patriotic poems. Abdul Ahad Azad wrote gazals as well as patriotic poems. Daya Ram Ganjoo advised men and women to reform their lives through his poems.

Pandit ZINDA KOUL wrote mystical and deeply devotional poetry. His famous poems are : VADIHE MANUSH, FERRYMAN LEAD THOU ME ACROSS. He is among the famous poets of modern Kashmir. Mirza Ghullam Hassan Beg 'Arif' complains against the capitalists who exploited the poor. Nand Lal Koul translated Hindustani plays.

After the tribal raids in 1947, CULTURAL FRONT was born, with the aims of reviving the cultural values and activities. The leaders were of Progressive Ideas such as : Dina Nath Nadim, G.R. Nazki, Abdul Haq, Burq, Noor Mohammad Roshan and Amin Kamil Sarla Lakhwara, Mohan Lal Misri etc. They wrote genuine poetry and introduced new forms sonnet by D.N. Nadim. There were published in the journal KWANG POOSH, and the GULREZ.

A new literary era dawned during the later 1950's when the cultural Academy and to some extent the Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, gave patronage to local writers. During the past two decades the writers made maiden attempts in prose writing. Awards were given to them by both the Academies. The Sahitya Akademi Winners are:—

(1) Akhtar Mohi-Ud-Din, For SAT SANGAR, '58.

(2) A. K. Taq, for KASHRE ZABAN HUND ILLAQUAWAD PHAIRA (Linguistics), 68

(3) Prof. M.U. Din Hajini, for MAQUALAT (Critical Discourse) '70.

The Cultural Academy, Kashmir award winners are :—

(1) Prof. M.U. Din Hajini for KASHRE NASRECH KITAB (A book of prose in Kashmiri). '62.

(2) A. K. Rehbar, for KASHRE ADABECH TAWARIKH (A History of Kashmiri Literature), '66.

(3) A. K. Tak, for KASHRE ZABAN HUND ILLAUAWAD PHAIRA, '69.

Second prize Winners are :

(1) Bansi 'Nirdosh', for BAAL MARAYO (Short Stories—'62).

(2) G. M. Sofi, for LOSMETE THRAK (Stories—'64)

(3) G. I. Gauhar, for Mujrim (Novel) '70.

(4) Prof. Fazilli, for SAYASATECH PAAR–E–Zan (Political Science), '70.

Mirza Arif wrote Travelogues. Akhtar Mohi-Ud-Din wrote SLAVMIR Classical works in foreign languages were translated by A.M. Lone (Gorky's MOTHER), G.M. Khayal (Aristotal's POETICS) Prof. Hajini Alif LAILA, Prof. Sadhu VETHE HIND MALLAR and Dr. S. Ahmad Rehnumas PAYMBER.

Short story became the forte and about 50% writers i.e. Noor Shah, Deepaka Koul, G. Nabi, H. K. Koul, G.R. Santosh, Amin Kamil, Taj Begum, Bansi Nirdosh and Dr. Raina.

Kashmiri literature is deficient in novels. However two novels came to mark, Akhtar's DOD DAG, '63; and Gauchar's MUJRIM.

Foreign works were instead translated : Gorky's MOTHER by A. M. Lone, Prem Chand's GODAN by Roshan : Tagore's CHOKHER BALI, by Prof. P.N. Pushp. Some journals also come into being : SOUN ADAB, SHEERAZA KOSHUR ADAB, and NAYB.

Critical comments on famous poets before '47 first appeared in the S.P. College magazine, named PRATAP. Generally, tradition was to write satire, or parody verse of a poet, within the first decade Professors J.L. Koul, Hajini, Pushp wrote criticism of prose writers. This was, also, done by Rahi, Firaq, Nadim, Kamil and Nadim. M.Y. Teng, Nazki, S.N. Zutshi, Sai, Lone, Rehbar, and Khayal added a lot to criticism, Prof. J.L. Koul's STUDIES IN KASHMIRI is a fine work of literary criticism of Kashmiri writers.

In Zian-Ul-Abidin's time (1420–70) Drama in Kashmiri had become a popular form of entertainment Bhoda Bhatta wrote ZAINA VILLASA and the stage-play enjoyed royal patronage. During Sultan Hassan's rule local fine arts were influenced by Iranian and Indian prototypes. Drama in verbal tradition flourished till the end if Chak rule. In 1658, BAND–JASHAN was another form of drama an open-air village folk theatre. DARZA FATHER alluded to some historic theme.

In the present century, a number of plays were written by Nand Lal Koul i.e. (SATECH KAHWAT). Tara Chand Trischal (PREMECH KAHAWAT, 1936) and Prof. Hajini (GRESS SUND GHARA).

Next, the Radio Dramas were written to be broadcast. In the beginning their aim was to criticise and counter Pakistani Radio Propaganda. Besides these Radio dramas D.N. Nadim wrote 'NEKI-TA-BADI', Kamil 'HABBA KHATOON' etc. Nadim's operas two in number–BOMBER TA YAMBERZAL (1953) became very popular.

The Academy of Art, Culture and Languages has been organising, since 1958, play competitions every year, and prize winning Plays are enacted in the Tagore Hall. A number of Classical dramas are, now, translated into Kashmiri under the patronage of the Sahitya Akademy, Delhi. In short, Kashmiri Literature is now flourishing by leaps and bounds. One may say, with confidence that Kashmiri literature is not lagging behind any Indian Literature in quality or quantity.

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Krishan Lal Kalla, retired Professor, Amar Singh Degree College, Srinagar, (Kashmir) has had a distinguished academic career, during which he was awarded a number of Gold and Silver Medals. After graduating in Sciences, he went in for Post-Graduation in English at Jammu and Kashmir University and completed the same in 1956. Soon after, he joined the Higher Education Department of the State, as a Lecturer in English and was posted at several Degree Colleges till 1990. He retired as Professor and Head of the Department of English, Amar Singh Degree College, Srinagar.

Mr. Kalla was awarded U.G.C. Research Fellowship in 1990 for his research on "Loss of faith in India and England - A comparative Study". He is a member of Kashmir Council of Research. He has a number of works to his credit and also has written articles for journals like "Radical Humanist", "J and K., University Review", "The Partap", "The Lalla Rookh", "The Verinag", and the "Martand".

His articles are thought provoking; his style is lucid. These articles have been appreciated by scholars like Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, Dr. Jagan Nath Azad, Dr. David Daiches and Dr. T.S. Kallapur.

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